HISTORY *of* THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

Eugene Staley

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By EUGENE STALEY

"He who sees things grow from their beginning will have the finest view of them."—ARISTOTLE

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PREFACE

This study aims to reveal the purposes, the problems, the methods, and something of the accomplishments of the state federation of labor as we find it in the American labor movement of today. It does so by tracing in detail the development of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, admittedly a leader in its field. For purposes of exposition this history is divided into three parts or periods, covering about fifteen years each. The concluding chapter is a brief summary.

A legislative summary included within each part brings together the main legislative developments in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor for that period. For the convenience of those who wish to follow the attitude of the organization on particular topics a uniform scheme of classification has been used throughout these legislative summaries. The classification adopted is explained in the introductory chapter.

A general note on sources and method appears in Appendix A, and sources are indicated throughout in the footnotes.

Appendix B presents some tables and charts showing the attendance at Illinois State Federation of Labor conventions (with something of its composition by trade and kinds of organizations), the relative strength of Chicago and downstate representation in the conventions, and the yearly income of the Federation.

Appendix C compares the Illinois State Federation of Labor with other state federations of labor.

This study is one of a series carried out under the auspices of the Local Community Research Committee at the Uni-

versity of Chicago. I gratefully acknowledge my obligation to that organization and to the Rockefeller Foundation.

The unstinted, friendly, and intelligent co-operation of Victor A. Olander, the fine-spirited secretary-treasurer of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, has made the work of completing this history not only much more effective but much more pleasant than it could possibly have been without his aid. Throughout this investigation he has shown a willingness to answer questions fully and fair-mindedly; he has extended the aid of his office in numerous ways; and he has gone over the manuscript with care, making many valuable suggestions and corrections. He has never, however, attempted to force his own opinions upon the writer, nor to interfere with the writer's own freedom of interpretation.

I desire to express my thanks to the many other persons within and without the trade-union movement who have been generous with their time and stores of information. The debt this history owes to them can be inferred from the many interviews cited in the footnotes.

The debt of gratitude which I am most happy to acknowledge is that to my teacher and counselor, Professor H. A. Millis, of the University of Chicago, who suggested this project in the beginning and gave kindly and unfailing advice and encouragement during its prosecution.

EUGENE STALEY

CHICAGO
March, 1929

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INTRODUCTION

The activities of a state federation of labor may be divided into two classes, according to whether they are essentially legislative or non-legislative. Within the first and most important class, directed to its task of securing favorable legislation, the state federation of labor performs four related functions. In the first place, it determines legislative objectives. This is done in its delegate conventions, guided by its officers and committees. Second, it performs a function of concentration, focusing upon the legislature whatever public sentiment exists in favor of its views on public policy. A lobbying organization, backed up by political activities, is the focusing device. A third function is that of public persuasion. Not only must sentiment which already exists in favor of its demands be brought to the attention of the legislature, but new public sentiment must be created to support the program of organized labor. It may be remarked that the state federation of labor seems to be more effective in its function of concentration than in that of public persuasion; it seems to focus existing sentiment, especially that gathered from the trade unions, more efficiently than it creates new sentiment in the public mind. Finally, once a labor law is enacted the state federation of labor undertakes a fourth function, the function of vigilance, watching over the administration and adjudication of the law.

The non-legislative functions of the state federation of labor are three. It strengthens trade unions from within, by organization work, by assisting in collective bargaining and trade disputes, by promoting harmonious relations between unions, and by maintaining morale. Second, it strengthens trade unions from without by seeking to better the public

relations of organized labor. The third non-legislative function is that of the education of the individual unionist. Some state federations consciously undertake this function and sponsor workers' education classes; all discharge it to some extent through their annual conventions. State federation conventions are in many respects trade-union schools.

A further word must be said about the first legislative function, that of determining legislative objectives. This is performed in accordance with two principles which lie at the root of the philosophy of all labor federations—local, state, and national—formed by the co-operation of independent and autonomous trade organizations. One of these is a principle of reciprocal reinforcement, which on matters of specific interest to particular trades operates to throw the political power of the entire movement behind the legislative demands of each individual union. When the building trades seek a new safety law, the miners and the teamsters and the printers back their demands, and each of these groups, in its turn, receives support for its projects from all the others. In effect, the state federation of labor operates as an amplifier or loud speaker for magnifying the voice of each of its affiliated organizations. On matters of general interest, a second principle, that of the "greatest common measure,"[1] comes into play. The program of the federation must be confined within the limits of those aims to which all, or nearly all, can agree. This is necessary because a federation is a loose association built not on compulsory adherence to the will of the majority but on voluntary co-operation.

What sort of legislative objectives does the state federation of labor seek? The system of classification adopted for use in the legislative summaries throughout this book, while primarily a device for convenience in exposition, may also

[1] The term is borrowed from Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

serve to throw light on this point. It is given in outline in the footnote below.[1]

Under I are grouped those legislative matters which relate rather directly to the *worker and his job*. Here we see

[1] The reader interested in following the development of the Illinois State Federation of Labor's policy on any particular topic may do so by looking under the appropriate heading in the legislative summaries for each period of its history:

I. RELATING TO THE WORKER AND HIS JOB

A. The workday and the work week
B. Payment of wages (truck, screening, liens, etc.)
C. Health, safety, and comfort (factory and mine legislation)
D. Accident compensation (employers' liability, workmen's compensation)
E. Child labor
F. Women in industry (hours, minimum wage)
G. Employment, unemployment
H. Occupational disease
I. Old age pensions
J. Health insurance; mothers' pensions
K. Public employees

II. REGULATION OF COMPETITION

A. Craft protection (license and qualification laws, apprenticeship, etc.)
B. Convict labor
C. Immigration and alien labor

III. RELATING TO LABOR'S ECONOMIC WEAPONS

A. Legal status of trade unions and their methods (conspiracy, incorporation, "iron clad," or "yellow dog," contract, boycotts, protection of labels)
B. The injunction in labor disputes
C. Settlement of disputes (arbitration, mediation)
D. Regulation of disputes (policing, militia, private detectives, state constabulary)

IV. RELATING TO LABOR'S POLITICAL WEAPONS

A. Ballot reform (women's suffrage, direct primary, etc.)
B. Initiative, referendum, recall; direct legislation
C. The legislature (House and Senate rules, unicameral proposal)
D. Administrative agencies (Department of Labor, Bureau of Statistics, general administration)
E. The courts
F. Constitutional revision

V. MORE GENERAL COMMUNITY MEASURES

A. Education and schools (free texts, compulsory attendance, vocational, Boy Scouts, military training, university)
B. Taxation (land monopoly, constitutional tax amendments)
C. Public utilities
D. Miscellaneous legislative issues:
   - Co-operative law
   - Housing
   - Gambling in food products
   - Postal savings
   - Waterways and roads
   - Pure foods
   - Free coinage, etc.

organized labor seeking to better the conditions of its members in factory, mine, and shop, by invoking the direct aid of the state through the method of legal enactment. The reader should note in the course of this history not only the variety and extent of legislation of this sort actually secured since the organization of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, but also certain significant changes in the desires of the trade-union movement itself—for example, on such topics as the legal limitation of the working day.

Under II the subjects treated have to do with the *regulation of competition*—regulation, that is, by legal enactment. By means discussed under this head organized labor attempts to establish statutory qualifications for entry into various crafts, thereby enhancing the dignity, promoting the safety, or increasing the bargaining strength of those crafts. Other proposals included in this topic are designed to preserve the demand for certain lines of labor (for example, against such eventualities as changes in technique, illustrated by the one-man street car); still others aim to protect the market for the products of certain crafts from competition outside the control of any trade union (convict labor); and still others seek to regulate the supply of labor in general (immigration restriction).

Under III in the legislative summaries appears a class of legislative matters which have been given paramount importance in late years by the Illinois State Federation of Labor—*those relating to labor's economic weapons.* Organized labor has other methods than that of legal enactment for improving the condition of the worker on the job and for regulating competition. These include organization and collective bargaining, enforced by the strike, the boycott, and use of the union label, with occasional resort to other means, such as producers' or consumers' co-operation. These economic weapons gain or lose tremendously in effectiveness

according as the rules of the game laid down by the political state to regulate their use are favorable or unfavorable. It makes a difference whether trade unions are conspiracies in the eyes of the law, whether "yellow dog" contracts can or cannot be upheld by the injunction process, what attitude the state takes toward arbitration, and who controls the police. Hence the importance of this third type of legislation.

The fourth class of legislative issues taken up by the Illinois State Federation of Labor has to do with the machinery of government. Just as the rules of the game may impair or augment the effectiveness of labor's economic weapons, so the effectiveness of its political weapons is affected by the suffrage laws, direct or indirect selection of candidates, the powers and rules of the legislature, administrative and court procedures, and the general provisions of the state constitution. So under IV are grouped those legislative issues *relating to labor's political weapons.* It must be remarked that many of the reforms in the machinery of government advocated by the Federation of Labor should not be interpreted merely as devices for the increase of the political power of organized labor; that would be too narrow a view. Trade unionists are not only trade unionists, but citizens, interested not only in bettering the political representation of organized labor—though, of course, that is an important and legitimate object—but also in perpetuating democratic institutions for the benefit of the wider community of ordinary people.

Likewise, classification V reveals the broader sphere of interest of the state federation of labor. Here are grouped *more general community measures* relating to such subjects as education and schools, taxation, public utilities, housing, savings banks, and pure food—all matters in which organized workers are vitally interested, not primarily as wage-earners or trade unionists, but as members of a wider community.

ILLINOIS LABOR LEGISLATION IN 1884

In order to appreciate the significant developments in labor legislation which the Illinois State Federation of Labor has helped to bring about, we must pause here to reflect on the status of Illinois labor law at the time of its organization.

The initial convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor met in Seamen's Hall, Chicago, in 1884. Illinois was the third most important manufacturing state in the Union, yet it had no state factory inspection whatever. Save for one act passed in 1869, providing that dangerous shafting should be boxed, the only legislation which pertained to the health or safety of workers applied exclusively to coal mines. The mining law dealt with escapement shafts, ventilation, signal systems, safe hoisting apparatus, and the like, but it was inadequately enforced and ineffective. A state inspector of mines and five district inspectors were established in 1883 in an attempt to make the law operative, and the same General Assembly yielded to the demands of the miners for a law under which they would be entitled to furnish checkweighmen. But nothing had been done about the abuses connected with the screening of coal and "truck" payment through company stores. The safety regulations were still far from perfect, and of course there was no provision for shot-firers and no Miners' Qualification Law.[1]

The employment of children at any age and for any hours was perfectly legal in Illinois when the State Federation of Labor came into existence, except that children under fourteen might not work in mines and their employment on the stage or in acrobatics was regulated. There was no compulsory education law. Likewise, the hours and conditions of

[1] Consult on all these legislative matters Earl R. Beckner, *The History of Illinois Labor Legislation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929).

labor for women in industry had never received the attention of the legislature.[1]

Workmen's compensation laws were unheard of in the eighties. The victim of an industrial accident might sue his employer for damages, but there was little chance of success in most cases, especially since the three common-law defenses of contributory negligence, assumption of risk, and the fellow-servant rule could be invoked.

Illinois did have a law, enacted in 1867 at the height of the eight-hour enthusiasm created by the teachings of Ira Steward, to the effect that eight hours should constitute a legal day's work. This statute is still on the books today but has never had any effect whatever.[2] A Mechanics' Lien Law, first passed in 1824 and afterward amended many times, together with a provision in the Garnishment Law exempting a small amount of wages from attachment, comprised the legislation relating to wages.

The State of Illinois followed the practice of letting the labor of convicts in its two penitentiaries at Joliet and Chester by contract to the highest bidders—commonly at extremely low rates, such as fifty cents a day. The contractors were thus enabled to place the products of such labor on the market at ruinously competitive prices, thereby working "an injustice alike to the manufacturer and to the honest workingmen of the State, against which they make constant and earnest protest."[3] No problem received more frequent and lengthy consideration at the hands of the Illinois State

[1] Except that women could not be employed in mines.

[2] It merely makes eight hours a legal day's work where there is no special agreement to the contrary. The courts hold that the fact of a longer workday implies such an agreement. Furthermore, the act allows any number of hours of overtime work, by agreement, and there is no method of enforcement.—*Centennial History of Illinois* III, 368–71; Commons and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States* II, 108; Illinois, *Public Laws* (1867), 101.

[3] Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report* (1882), p. 258.

Federation of Labor in its early years than that of convict labor.

The Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, established in 1879, represented one bit of labor legislation already achieved by organized labor. It had been created after the Socialistic Labor party of Chicago, supported by the votes of trade unionists, had elected three representatives and one senator to the legislature in 1878.[1]

Finally, what of the legal status of labor organizations themselves? A law enacted in 1863 and known as the LaSalle Black Law provided that any persons "who shall by threat, intimidation or *otherwise* seek to prevent any other person from working at any lawful business on any terms that he may see fit" were to be deemed guilty of misdemeanors and to be punished by fines not to exceed $100. A fine up to $500 or imprisonment might be inflicted on "any persons combining to deprive the owner of the lawful use and management of property or to prevent other persons from being employed by him on such terms as they may agree upon." There were special provisions relating to coal mines. Had this statute been rigorously applied it would have seriously hampered the activities of trade unions, but as a matter of fact it was a dead letter. Nevertheless, the existence of such a law was an ever

[1] Floyd Dell, "Socialism and Anarchism in Chicago," in Curry, *Chicago: Its History and Its Builders* (Chicago, 1912). A special committee on labor was appointed by the General Assembly at the request of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, and its members visited factories in Chicago under the guidance of such prominent Socialists as Thomas J. Morgan, George Schilling, Goldwater, Streator, and Ehmann.—*Report of Special Committee on Labor of Illinois General Assembly*, House of Representatives (1879). Of the legislation proposed to it, the General Assembly enacted that relating to a Bureau of Labor Statistics but rejected the rest. The Bureau had published two reports by 1884, volumes of 250 and 425 pages, written from a viewpoint sympathetic to labor organization.—Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report* (1883), Introduction.

present threat, and labor organizations were demanding its repeal.[1]

It is apparent, then, that in 1884 only the barest beginnings of a labor code could be found in the Statutes of Illinois. A large part of this history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor will be devoted to tracing the process by which the state labor law of 1884 developed into that of 1929.

ILLINOIS LABOR ORGANIZATION IN 1884

The non-legislative functions of a state federation of labor are directed chiefly toward the promotion and strengthening of labor organization; and, in turn, it is upon the support of active local unions that the state federation depends for its power. Hence, we must briefly examine the situation in Illinois with regard to the organization of labor when the State Federation was launched.

Most of the early unions of the sixties and seventies succumbed to the long depression which followed the panic of 1873. With the revival of prosperity at the close of the seventies, however, the spirit of organization received a new impetus, manifesting itself especially in the mushroom-like growth of the Order of the Knights of Labor. Consequently, a large part of the membership of Illinois labor organizations in 1884 was made up of comparatively recent recruits. There were some older trade unions, especially among those with national or international affiliations, in which solidarity, efficiency, and discipline prevailed; but there were many,

[1] The LaSalle Black Law had been enacted in 1863 as the result of violence in connection with the coal strikes of that period, particularly in the region around LaSalle. It appears that it was rarely employed against organized labor. Says the Bureau of Labor Statistics: "The law is virtually a dead letter; and, although there have been arrests made in the last four years under it by complaints before justices of the peace, yet no grand jury has acted under it since 1865.—*Report* (1881), p. 230.

both unions and assemblies of the Knights of Labor, composed wholly of new and not always homogeneous materials.[1]

The two general groups of labor organizations in the state were the trade unions, which embraced only men of specific occupations, and the Knights of Labor, an organization which sought to include all laboring men of whatever occupation in one common brotherhood. The basic group in the Order of the Knights of Labor was the local assembly, corresponding to the local union; a local assembly sometimes included members of only one trade, sometimes it was composed of mixed trades. The local assemblies were allied through representation in district assemblies or state assemblies, and delegates from these formed the General Assembly, which exercised ultimate authority in the Order. In Illinois there were several district assemblies, and also a state assembly. The philosophies of the rising young Order of the Knights of Labor and that of the older trade unions were widely different, but at the opening of our narrative we find them joined in common enterprises. Both desired legislative reform in the interests of the working classes.

[1] Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report* (1886), p. 165. Those trades organized with national or international affiliations included the bakers, stationary engineers, horseshoers, some of the glass-blowers, the metal-workers, plasterers, cigar-makers, some of the carpenters, the electrotypers, furniture-workers, gas-fitters, iron-molders, iron- and steel-workers, plumbers, seamen, and the printers. The strictly local organizations were, however, more numerous. A partial list of trades organized locally would have included bricklayers and stonemasons, hod-carriers, brewers and malsters, butchers, collar-makers, clerks, furriers, grain-trimmers, harness-makers, lithographers, lumbermen, paper-hangers, roofers, laborers, pavers, and wood-workers.—*Ibid.*, p. 167.

The Miners' Protective Association was a state organization having between fifty and sixty lodges and a membership of upward of seven thousand. The order originated shortly before 1880, but attained particular efficiency in the middle of the decade. The organizations of railway employees were, of necessity, national rather than local in character, but on account of the premier position of Illinois in railroading many members were found within the state.—*Ibid.*, p. 167.

In the year 1884 the labor movement was on the brink of a tremendous but temporary gain in membership which swelled the numbers in the Knights of Labor at an astounding rate never duplicated before or since in American labor history. Two and a half years later, just before the peak and an equally rapid decline, the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 47 per cent—nearly half—of the members then in labor organizations had been enrolled within the last eighteen months, and 27 per cent within the last six months.[1] As to the extent of organization among workingmen of Illinois in the middle of the year 1886, the Bureau reached the following conclusions after a careful investigation:

Trade unions	328 with	61,904	members
Knights of Labor Assemblies	306 with	52,461	members
Total	634 with	114,365	members
Total, deducting duplications		103,843[2]	members

Of the entire trade-union and Knights of Labor membership in Illinois, Chicago supplied 67 per cent. This is indeed a marked concentration; it shows the influence of compactness and city life upon the organization of labor. About one million of Illinois' less than four million people lived in Chi-

[1] *Report* (1886), pp. 195 f.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 192. The census of 1890 reported, in all, 120,558 males employed in the manufactures of Illinois. The whole number of men employed by the railroads of the state was placed in 1882 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics at 43,651, while the number engaged in coal-mining was 25,846. The total number employed in these three divisions of industry would therefore be, at a very rough estimate, about 190,000 in the middle eighties. The estimate of labor organization membership given in the text (103,843) is about 54 per cent of this number. It must be remembered, however, that the Knights of Labor included some farmers, small merchants, and professional men in its membership; while certain trades, such as carpenters and stonemasons, are omitted from the 190,000. Nevertheless, it is probable that at the height of the inflated and temporary expansion in the middle eighties a larger percentage of the eligible workers were enrolled, at least nominally, in some labor organization than is the case today.

cago, and 55 per cent of the employees engaged in manufacturing were employed there.[1]

A word must be said of the public attitude toward labor organization in the eighties. Like everything else connected with unionism, this, too, was undergoing a change. Even yet, however, relatively few people regarded the organization of labor as something natural and necessary under the industrial system. "To the press, labor unrest and agitation were only other names for communism and socialism—a fearful embodiment of things foreign and alien."[2] The impractical demands of organized workingmen for shorter hours, safety devices, employers' liability, the right to organize, and the limitation of child labor were not to be condoned; such startling measures would demoralize business. The *Illinois State Register* in its issue of March 13, 1880, commented on the eight-hour movement: "The thing is really too silly to merit the attention of a body of lunatics. . . . and the idea of 'striking' for eight hours is about as sensible as 'striking' for the pay without the hours." Mark Crawford, a leader in the Seamen's Hall Convention, relates that "a man who belonged to a trade union was regarded as an anarchist."[3]

THE PROCESS OF LEGISLATION

Now we are ready to take up the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. As the story unfolds we shall find that it is in the legislative functions of the State Federation

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 221.

[2] *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 163.

[3] Interview. Mark L. Crawford was more than once president of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly and took part in both the Terre Haute and Pittsburgh meetings out of which grew the forerunner to the American Federation of Labor. He is one of the few men now living who was present at the organization of the state federation in Illinois. A printer by trade, he was prominent in his own union; at one time he was international secretary and at another international president.

of Labor that its essential character lies. In the details of internal politics, resolutions, committee reports, indorsements, and lobbying methods, the discerning reader will perceive that he is really beholding a part of the legislative process as it operates within the American political system.

If this book may be said to have a central theme it is this: that he who would view the process of legislation must look behind the legislature, just as he who would understand meteorology must study more than weather vanes. Within that wide range of legislation in which organized labor takes an interest the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor will take us one step further back, beyond General Assemblies and politicians, and show us one of the contact points between the political and the economic systems, where new laws are being shaped.

For the state federation of labor is an economic institution and it is also a political institution. In its fundamental character it is a link between the economic system of voluntary exchange on the one hand and the political system of compulsory law and order on the other. It helps to shape the legal or institutional framework within which economic operations are carried on. It does so by focusing upon the state government the wishes of one set of interests in the economic world, the interests of labor. Taken in conjunction with those agencies, like the manufacturers' associations and chambers of commerce, which focus upon the state government the wishes of other interests in the economic world, the state federation of labor is a part of what may be called, using the term in a wide sense, the machinery of government. The state federation of labor thus occupies an important place in the legislative process, and we shall see that its influence is generally forward rather than back, for progress rather than reaction.

PART I

THE PERIOD 1884–97

CONVENTIONS OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

1884–97

Year	Convention City	Number of Delegates
1884	Chicago	104
1885	Springfield	34
1886	Decatur	27
1887	Springfield	35
1888	Peoria	31
1889	Bloomington	18
1890	Jacksonville	12
1890	Quincy	33
1891	Alton	50
1892	Ottawa	75
1893	Galesburg	56
1894	Belleville	99
1895	Peoria	*
1896	East St. Louis	64
1897	Bloomington	*

*No data.

CHAPTER I

THE SEAMEN'S HALL CONVENTION

THE CALL

The interests of wageworkers and the producing classes imperatively call for a state convention of delegates representing the various trades' unions, Knights of Labor, and other labor organizations, to the end that the united and harmonious sentiment of the State of Illinois be heard on the great question of the day which overshadows all other—labor reform.

So said a circular drafted by a committee of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly and mailed to the labor organizations of Illinois in January, 1884. On December 23, 1883, J. B. Murphy, of the Tanners' and Curriers' Union (Knights of Labor), had proposed the appointment of five members of the Trades Assembly "to devise ways and means for holding a convention of all labor organizations in the state," and this was their first move.[1]

The circular continued:

Our brethren in the Dominion of Canada, the states of Missouri, Minnesota, Maryland, and New York have already held conventions, which have been productive of much good. In New York practical measures have been taken to abolish the prison contract labor system, and by concerted action this nefarious system was overwhelmingly voted down by the ballot-box. In this state we have various measures which we wish enacted into laws, and several bad laws which should be repealed; and it is unnecessary to enumerate the benefits to be derived from holding a large and representative state convention of the organized labor element of Illinois.

The Trade and Labor Assembly, in accordance with the above resolutions, appointed a committee of five to devise ways and means to carry

[1] J. B. Murphy, P. H. McLogan, J. P. McGinley, John Foley, and W. J. Powell were the members of the committee, later enlarged by the addition of Charles A. Rowan, W. H. Muldoon, and George Rodgers.—*Inter-Ocean*, Chicago, December 24, 1883, p. 8; *ibid.*, March 27, 1884, p. 5.

out this object. At a meeting of the committee it was resolved to recommend the following:

PROGRAM OF CONVENTION

1. That a state convention be held about the middle of March.

2. That each union, Knights of Labor and other labor organizations, be allowed one delegate for 100 members or less, and an additional one for every 100 up to 500, but that no organization be allowed more than five delegates.

3. That delegates shall come with properly accredited credentials.

As to the place of holding such convention, Springfield, Bloomington, and Chicago have been mentioned, and the committee are desirous of suiting the majority.[1]

For some years the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly had been seeking "labor reform," and in agitating for concrete legislative measures it had been performing many of the functions which later belonged to the State Federation of Labor. In a declaration of aims issued by its predecessor, the Chicago Trades Council,[2] six out of eleven planks had plainly called for action by the state legislature; and of the other purposes announced at the same time, there was hardly one which might not have been furthered by efforts on a statewide as well as a local basis.[3] Except for the creation of a

[1] *Ibid.*, January 7, 1884, p. 8; *Times*, Chicago, same date, p. 8; *Chicago Tribune*, same date, p. 8; *Times*, January 21, 1884, p. 8.

[2] The Chicago Trades Council was launched in 1877, and after disagreement in 1879 over the question of admitting secret societies to membership it broke up and reunited under the name Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, which was retained until the reorganization of 1896 when the present title of Chicago Federation of Labor first appeared.—See T. C. Bigham, "The Chicago Federation of Labor," Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1924.

[3] The declaration of purposes referred to in the text included: the organization of labor unions of all branches of trade and labor; the local, national, and international amalgamation of all labor unions; repeal of all conspiracy laws; reduction of the hours of labor; higher wages; factory, mine, and workshop inspection; abolition of contract convict labor and the truck system; responsibility of employers for accidents caused by neglected machinery; prohibition of child labor; the establishment of labor bureaus; and labor propaganda by means of the labor press, labor lectures, and the employment of organizers.—*The Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, pp. 448–50.

State Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1879, the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly had met with slight success for its legislative program in the General Assembly. It is not strange, then, that with the elections of 1884 approaching it should endeavor to assemble the organized labor forces of all Illinois for united action on the question of "labor reform."

By January 20 Mr. Murphy was able to report that favorable replies were coming in from the committee's circular, and two weeks later the Trades Assembly decided definitely to proceed with plans for a convention, which should assemble in Chicago on March 26, 1884, and continue in session four days.[1] When the official call was sent out on February 9 it went to trade and labor unions, Knights of Labor assemblies, and also to some of the farmers' granges in the state.[2]

As the appointed day drew near the Committee on Arrangements beamed with satisfaction. The success of the convention was already assured; advance replies indicated that as many as two or three hundred delegates might be present.[3] "Seamen's Hall had been engaged and would be suitably decorated. The prospects were for a much larger attendance than was at first anticipated. The State Grange had also decided to send delegates."[4]

Meanwhile, the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly bestirred itself to arrange a tentative program for the meeting it was calling. It resolved to recommend the appointment of fourteen committees as soon as possible after the delegates

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, January 21, 1884, p. 8; *ibid.*, February 4, 1884, p. 8. Delegates chosen to represent the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly were: J. P. McGinley, J. B. Murphy, Fred Cook, John Foley, and Thomas Randall.—*Inter-Ocean*, February 4, 1884.

[2] *Ibid.*, March 27, 1884, p. 5.

[3] *Ibid.*, February 18, 1884, p. 8; *Chicago Tribune*, same date, p. 8.

[4] *Chicago Tribune*, March 17, 1884, p. 8.

had come together. The list reveals vividly what the Trades Assembly leaders conceived to be the job of the new state labor organization they hoped to establish: Committees on Child Labor, Female Labor, Convict Labor, Labor Statistics, Hours of Labor and Wages Paid, Sanitary Inspection, Mines and Mining, Steam Power and Machinery, Standard of Living among Working People, Organization and Amalgamation of Trade Unions and Labor Societies, Legislation (National, State, and Municipal), Political Action and Legislative Candidates, Education, and "Land Reform and General Regulation of Railroads and Telegraph Lines."[1]

THE CONVENTION

On the morning of March 26, 1884, Seamen's Hall, at 99 West Randolph Street, was "handsomely decorated with flags, banners, and labor emblems from different trades assemblies"; and as the delegates gathered it was apparent that the state labor convention—the first convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, as it proved—was to be truly representative of organized workingmen in Illinois. One hundred four accredited delegates appeared.[2] "I remember," says Mark Crawford, "that we were surprised at the number who came."[3]

The convention was about evenly divided between representatives of the various trade unions and the Knights of

[1] *Inter-Ocean*, March 3, 1884.

[2] *Proc.* (1884). (The abbreviation "Proc." followed by the date will be used throughout this book for citations to the official printed proceedings of the Illinois State Federation of Labor's annual conventions. "Proc. (1884)" in this case refers to a document found in the library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison which bears the following legend on its cover-page: "Official Proceedings of the Illinois State Labor Convention Held in Chicago, *Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, March 26, 27 and 28, 1884.* Chicago: The J. M. W. Jones Stationery and Printing Company, 1884."

[3] Interview.

Labor.[1] Sixty-one of the delegates came from Chicago and forty-three from downstate—Springfield, Joliet, Danville, Bloomington, Aurora, Morris, Streator, Pekin, Ottawa, and Bartonville. Three city central bodies were represented: the Joliet Trade and Labor Council, the Springfield Trade and Labor Assembly, and the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly. Practically all the delegates from the smaller places were Knights, and the Knights of Labor assemblies in Chicago contributed twenty-one members to the convention. Mrs. O. A. Bishop, Women's L. A. 1789, had the distinction of being the only woman delegate.[2]

Most of these representatives of organized labor came with something "on their minds," and some with definite programs of action which they wanted the convention to adopt. District Assembly 24, for example, a growing power in Chicago labor circles as men trooped into the Knights of Labor, had met the Sunday before and adopted a declaration of principles and recommendations to be submitted by their

[1] There were forty-seven recorded from trade unions and forty-five from Knights of Labor local and district assemblies. Among the trade unions the Cigarmakers' Union led in number of delegates with eight, of whom five came from Local No. 14 in Chicago and one each from Aurora, Morris and Ottawa. The Iron Molders' Union was next, with six delegates from as many different locals in Chicago, Moline, Springfield, Grand Crossing, Joliet, and Peoria. Typographical 16, Chicago, contributed five delegates, and the Typographical locals in Springfield and Joliet sent one each. The Stonecutters' Union of Chicago, the Chicago Seamen's Union, and the Bricklayers' and Stonemasons' Unions of Chicago had five delegates each; while the Carpenters and Joiners and the Scandinavian Typographical Union, both of Chicago, were represented by three and two delegates, respectively. Trade unions sending a single representative were: Journeymen Horseshoers, Chicago; Woodworking Machine Hands, Chicago; Journeymen Tailors, Springfield; Trunkmakers, Chicago; and the Miners' Protective Union, District 5, Bartonville. Other trades were represented by Knights of Labor Local Assemblies organized on a craft basis, as: Painters' L. A. 1940 of Chicago, four delegates; Coopers' L. A. 2309, Chicago, three delegates; Shoemakers' L. A. 1790, Chicago, two delegates; Tanners' and Curriers' L. A., Chicago, one delegate; and Harnessmakers' L. A. 1835, Chicago, one delegate.—(*Proc.* 1884).

[2] *Proc.* (1884), credentials list.

delegates. This document, doubtless drawn by George Schilling, expounded the idealistic Knights of Labor philosophy of co-operation by self-employed labor to abolish wage slavery; made certain specific recommendations relating to the reduction of the hours of labor, compulsory education, modification of debtor and tenant laws, and abolition of contract convict labor; and wound up with an appeal to workers of whatever nationality, creed, or color, skilled and unskilled, organized and unorganized, "to join hands with us and each other, to the end that poverty and all its attendant evils shall be abolished forever." Most important of all was a paragraph obviously inspired by the land monopoly and single-tax philosophy of Henry George, who cast his spell over so many reformers in the eighties. This was dubbed "socialistic" in the convention; apparently labor men were not yet familiar enough with single-tax doctrine to distinguish it from socialism.[1]

Each delegate shared the hope of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly that out of this convention would grow a state-wide organized labor movement to influence legislation. "That was the purpose—to work for legislation that would militate for workers."[2] But this does not mean that all was harmony. Within the labor movement, and reflected in the convention, were all shades of opinion, from that of the conservative trade unionists or "pure and simplers" who eschewed all "fads" and high theories, through the broad doctrines of the Knights of Labor, to the more or less radical ideas of progressive trade unionists, single-taxers, and socialists.

[1] The remarkable document submitted by District Assembly 24 also recommended for general reading "the following labor literature: by Henry George, 'Progress and Poverty' and 'Social Problems'; by Thornton, 'On Labor' and 'History of Trades Unions'; John Swinton's paper, the *Irish World*." The document in full was printed in the *Inter-Ocean*, March 27, 1884, p. 3.

[2] Joseph W. Farris, interview.

The conservatives, led by such men as George Rodgers, president of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, Mark Crawford, and J. P. McGinley, were in the saddle. They were determined to guide the convention in strict trade-union channels. In fact, a *Chicago Tribune* reporter found it "generally understood that no socialists will be admitted."[1] Certain it is that delegates from outside Chicago were buttonholed as they arrived and warned to look out for George Schilling, that he was a radical, and that they should vote against anything he might submit.[2] Nevertheless, some of the trade unionists, and especially the Knights of Labor, were willing to listen to the more radical arguments. The depression of 1883–84 had brought hard times, and the miseries of the seventies were not yet forgotten.[3]

It was nearly eleven o'clock when J. B. Murphy of the Trades Assembly's committee called the meeting to order and read the official call for the convention. He concluded by nominating for chairman pro tem Mr. Daniel McLaughlin, a popular miner from Braidwood, who was declared unanimously elected amid the cheers of the delegates.[4] "It rests with the workingmen of Illinois whether the contract convict

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, March 26, 1884.

[2] Interview, George A. Schilling. Richard Powers agrees that Schilling's statement is correct. "These scientific things were too advanced for the labor movement at that time. We didn't want to get into those things then."—Interview.

[3] Joseph W. Farris, of Springfield, tells the writer that he had been stirred by the Henry George movement and his great book *Progress and Poverty* which appeared about 1880. Farris was sent to the 1884 convention by his local of iron-molders (L. A. 271, Knights of Labor), though he was a mere youth at the time. When warned against Schilling, the prominent leader of D. A. 24, he was all the more anxious to meet the man, found Schilling had "the right ideas," and supported him in every way. Schilling and Farris later fought together in the State Federation battles of the nineties, as we shall see.

[4] Daniel McLaughlin served several terms in the legislature, where he put through a number of miners' bills. Later he moved to Colorado.—Interviews, Mark Crawford and George Schilling.

labor system shall be permitted to stand," said Mr. McLaughlin in a brief speech. The contract system had been abolished in New York and elsewhere and could not long continue anywhere if the rights of the laboring classes were recognized by the law-makers. The truck system of paying employees must be abolished; miners should be paid in cash and at more frequent intervals. Organized labor must seek to do away with the evils of child labor and to secure better educational facilities for children. All this and more might follow, he said, through the united and harmonious action of this convention and others like it.[1] With this prophecy he assumed the chair and the Seamen's Hall Convention got under way.

A Committee on Permanent Organization brought in a suggested list of officers to serve during the convention, as follows: president, George Rodgers, Chicago; first vice-president, H. A. Coffeen, Danville; second vice-president, Daniel McLaughlin, Braidwood; third vice-president, T. S. Schofield, Bloomington; secretary, August Stirmel, Chicago; first assistant secretary, George Brown, Springfield; second assistant secretary, T. L. Harrison, Alton; treasurer, M. J. Haley, Joliet. These nominees were approved.

"At this juncture," we are told, "voluminous rolls of paper began to emerge from scores of pockets. Nearly every delegate had a resolution or suggestion to offer."[2] The following, presented by the Chicago Seamen's Union, has the distinction of being the first resolution adopted by the pioneer convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor:

WHEREAS, We deem it the duty of the United States government to make suitable laws for the prevention of unnecessary danger in a dangerous vocation, under federal jurisdiction; and

[1] *Chicago Daily News*, March 26, 1884, p. 1; *Proc.* (1884).

[2] *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1884.

WHEREAS, The bill now pending in the United States Congress, known as the "Foran Shipping Bill," for the better protection of American seamen, is a measure of long-delayed justice; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we urge Congress to consider as soon as possible the aforementioned bill, which we believe to be absolutely necessary for the safety of the lives of American seamen, and will assuredly do away with a large percentage of the unnecessary destruction of life and property occurring annually on these inland seas through the ignorance and avarice of unscrupulous vessel owners.

Resolved, That we appeal to all workingmen and to the citizens in general to use their influence in urging Congress to pass this bill, securing to seamen, and to passengers who are forced to travel on the lakes, the same protection to life and health that citizens on land have already secured under the laws of the State of Illinois and of the general government; and be it

Resolved, That the foregoing resolutions be indorsed by this Convention of the trade and labor organizations of the State of Illinois and a copy of the same forwarded to the Committee on Commerce which is now in session in Washington.[1]

From now on through the three days it was in session, the convention ground a grist of similar resolutions. Some dealt with national questions, others with matters of state or local interest. Many had to do with legislative proposals; others sanctioned boycotts or treated of trade-union affairs. One by Mr. Mill, Typographical Union No. 16, Chicago, called upon Illinois Congressmen to oppose the present form of the Dorsheimer Copyright Bill. Another denounced the secretary of war, Mr. Lincoln, for working the men in his department ten hours per day in defiance of the eight-hour law; it was referred to the Federation of Trades of the United States and Canada to be presented to the secretary. Another condemned the wholesale employment of children under fourteen years of age in the shops, offices, stores, and mills of the nation. Boycotts declared by the Typographical Union against the *Illinois State Journal* of Springfield and the *New*

[1] *Proc.* (1884). The secretary was instructed to telegraph the action taken to the Congressional Committee in Washington.

York Tribune were indorsed. In the former case, officers of the convention communicated the action to the State Central Committee of the Republican party, whose official organ the *Journal* claimed to be.[1]

President George Rodgers of the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly had the convention indorse a bill "drafted by a prominent legal gentleman of Chicago," which sought to regulate the mode of bringing suits before justices of the peace. The chairman explained to the country delegates that Chicago was afflicted with a lot of thieves who styled themselves collectors, and who gained a living by bringing unjust garnishee suits against laboring men in courts forty miles away. Two more draft legislative measures laid before the body by President Rodgers and approved related to tenancy laws. Discriminatory freight rates and rebates were considered. Another resolution called upon the legislature to repeal that provision of the statutes which limited to $5,000 the right of recovery in favor of the family of one who had met death by the wrongful act, neglect, or default of another; and a recent decision by Judge Anthony in which he had interpreted the fellow-servant rule to mean that an employer could not be held responsible for the carelessness of a foreman in an industrial accident case came in for vigorous denunciation.[2]

Several members asked the convention to adopt resolutions relating to the interests of their particular trades. One such proposed by the miners is noteworthy because its adoption was an extreme example of that principle of reciprocal reinforcement which is imbedded in the philosophy of federation.[3] The miners asked for the repeal of the Smoke Nuisance Ordinance recently adopted by the city of Chicago,

[1] *Proc.* (1884).

[2] *Proc.* (1884).

[3] Cf. Introduction, p. 2.

alleging that it favored the anthracite industry of other states at the expense of the bituminous mines and miners of Illinois. Several Chicago men opposed the resolution. They pointed to the fact that the Trade and Labor Assembly had been instrumental in getting the ordinance passed and argued that bituminous coal might be used with smoke consumers. Nevertheless, the miners carried their point,[1] for a federation of trades will follow the wishes of the trade particularly concerned on matters within that trade's immediate province.

Representatives of the Street Railway Employees' Benevolent Association had come to the convention with the request that their names be withheld—they were fearful of losing their jobs[2]—but they put before the delegates a description at once heartrending and mirth-provoking of the working conditions in their calling, and thereby got their complaints into the newspapers. They asked the convention to call the attention of the Humane Society to the "huge iron safes" which conductors were forced to wear around their necks.[3]

There were numerous other resolutions, many of which attested to the broad social interests of the labor convention. Mr. Griffith, of District Assembly 24, moved "that we recommend equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex," and his suggestion was adopted. Politicians who so degraded themselves as to become employment agents for monopolies, replacing honest workmen by political henchmen, were roundly denounced. At the instance of Mark Crawford, Typographical 16, the convention deplored the evil effects of "trashy" or dime-novel literature and demanded that Congress take up the subject.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1884); *Chicago Daily News*, March 28, 1884, p. 2.

[2] Interview, Mark Crawford.

[3] *Proc.* (1884).

[4] *Proc.* (1884). The *New York World* had recently published an article on juvenile depravity and bad literature; the *Chicago Tribune* commented on it editorially in its issue of March 29, 1884. Doubtless this suggested the resolution.

Occasionally some manifestation of the potential disunities lurking in the convention came to the surface. It will be remembered that organized farmers as well as laborers had been invited to participate. The State Grange did send a delegation of five, but after the first day's session they left, giving this interview to the press:

> The grangers will have nothing to do with this convention, and our delegation will return home tomorrow morning. We cannot act in harmony with these labor organizations, since they will advocate the eight-hour system of work, which, of course, no farmer can live up to, especially during harvest time.[1]

This was not the last occasion in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor when hoped-for co-operation with the farmers struck a snag. Interestingly enough, the eight-hour plank subsequently adopted by the Seamen's Hall Convention specifically exempted farm labor.[2]

When Charles Rowan arose to urge that workingmen discountenance the use of any but union-made cigars bearing on the box the blue label of the Cigarmakers' International Union he touched upon a bitter feud. Some one from the Progressive Cigarmakers' Union rose to inquire whether the speaker was opposed to that organization. "It is a seceding group," replied Mr. Rowan. Then the Progressive Union member "got himself considerably disliked by indulging in personalities concerning the relative importance of the two organizations," and soon the room was in confusion. The chairman hinted that it was about time for the sergeants-at-arms appointed the day before to exhibit their usefulness; Vice-President T. S. Schofield, of Bloomington, made a plea for moderation and harmony, urging that the delegates had a grand work to accomplish, which they must go about quietly but earnestly so that their demands would be recognized by

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1884, p. 7; *Times*, same date, p. 5.

[2] *Proc.* (1884).

the government; then comparative calm once more prevailed.[1] But the blue label was destined to be heard of again in Illinois labor conventions, and that not many years distant.

A paragraph from District Assembly 24's pre-convention declaration was the bomb which unleashed the discords latent in the widely varying philosophies of the delegates. Mr. T. H. Ling, from the Painters' Assembly, Knights of Labor, moved:

> That this Convention denounce the present monopolistic ownership of land as a crime against man, as the prop which made the institution of chattel slavery both possible and profitable, and as constituting in modern society the chief cause of those socialistic inequalities represented by the millionaire on the one hand and the wage slave on the other.

Mr. Crawford was on his feet in an instant. It was time to take hold of this subject and settle it, he said. They had fooled with the socialistic question long enough. He hoped this resolution would be discussed and met fairly on the floor. A clique in the assembly had been trying all along to foist socialistic measures upon the convention; here and now was the time to decide whether this was a labor convention or a socialistic organization. Mr. Ling finally succeeded in getting a hearing, and immediately disclaimed any socialistic sympathies; but, he insisted, this land question was a most important one for the convention to consider. Then he was allowed to read his statistics, which showed the immense quantities of land owned by a few men or syndicates to the exclusion of the public generally, "and thereby gained a number of friends."[2]

There were several ardent followers of Henry George's persuasive doctrines in the convention, among whom were George Schilling, a cooper prominent in District Assembly 24,

[1] *Chicago Daily News*, March 27, 1884, p. 1; *Times*, March 28, 1884, p. 5.

[2] *Times, Tribune, News.*

M. J. Haley, who described simply but effectively how he had seen the poor people of Ireland die of hunger while the land was monopolized by the rich, and a young man named Joseph Farris from Springfield. One must read the glowing passages in *Progress and Poverty*, says the latter, to understand the vision of these men who fought to down the "land monopoly" with the single tax. "You can see how they would fight as an army."[1] Opposed to them were a majority who wanted to tread carefully for the good of the Illinois labor movement, conservative but constructive leaders who felt that solid building must be slow, and in addition—as always—a few vociferous fanatics who fumed and fussed on principle against anything which might be labeled "socialistic and communistic." Mr. Bibel, of Bloomington, was not averse to preventing aliens and foreign syndicates from monopolizing the public domain, but would have nothing to do with this resolution, as read. He said that he owned two houses and lots which he had acquired by eighteen years sobriety and industry; he had fought under the Stars and Stripes and would again; and the red flag of the cutthroat commune should never fly over him if he could help it! He did not want the labor convention to mix up with socialistic propositions. His remarks were greeted with enthusiastic applause.

More speeches followed, until A. C. Cameron rose to say that the convention had accomplished great good—it was then near adjournment on the last day—but that he feared further discussion would be an entering wedge to split the

[1] Joseph Farris and George Schilling still remember this debate in the Seamen's Hall Convention and described it to the writer with great vividness. To them it was the high spot of the convention. One of them, when interviewed after forty years, believed that the discussion had consumed some fifteen hours (whereas the printed records indicate that it could not have lasted more than three), and the other had the impression that the resolution had finally carried. Such are the tricks which time, and an ardent cause, play on memory:

positive work the delegates had achieved. A motion to lay the resolution on the table carried by an overwhelming majority, amid great applause from those who opposed it.[1]

Thus, not all was harmony in the Seamen's Hall Convention, but not all was disharmony by any means. We have still to record the most important part of that positive work of which A. C. Cameron spoke.

THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

If trade unionists and Knights, conservatives, progressives, and single-taxers differed among themselves as to general theories of labor reform, they were nevertheless in agreement upon many practical measures which must be achieved—and chief among these was the abolition of contract convict labor. Since 1871 the labor of convicts in the Illinois penitentiaries had been let out under what was known as the "contract system." That is, the state provided buildings and shops, food, clothing, and discipline, and the labor of the convicts was sold to the highest bidder for a given sum per day. The state delivered the men in shops or yards, within the walls, and the contractor employed them under his own superintendents.[2]

Workingmen had long felt that the competition of this labor, furnished, as it was, at a price much less than the wages of free labor, was an injustice to workers in those trades such as stonecutting, cooperage, and shoemaking which were affected by the system. Manufacturers in these trades joined with labor in protesting against the contract plan, but the active agitation for its abolition was carried on by labor organizations.[3] Contract convict labor was the

[1] *Times, Tribune, News, Inter-Ocean.* The official proceedings dispose of this entire discussion in one line: "The resolution was debated at length, and finally rejected."

[2] Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report* (1886), p. 9.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 98; *Report* of 1882, p. 258.

great grievance mentioned in the call for the state labor convention, occupied much of the attention of the delegates at Seamen's Hall, became the most important plank of the platform adopted there, and was the subject of the first legislative success of the state labor organization which resulted. The founding of the Illinois State Federation of Labor was due to the contract labor system more than to any other specific cause.

Mr. Muldoon, statistician of the Coopers' Assembly of Chicago, presented to the Seamen's Hall Convention an exhaustive report in which he reviewed systems of convict labor in the United States, the numbers employed, the industries affected, and the situation in each state. In Illinois, he said, many coopers, who had served long apprenticeships, had been compelled to abandon their trade wholly on account of the competition of contractors who bought convict labor; if contract convict labor were abolished in Illinois, he believed the wages of coopers alone would increase at least 38 per cent. In the boot and shoe industry the average wage of a freely employed workman in Illinois was $355 a year; yet convicts, 766 in number, were now being hired for that occupation at $159 each. Was this fair competition? Other delegates spoke freely on the subject from the standpoints of their own trades. They had so much to say that it was necessary to appoint timekeepers to enforce a five minute rule. When the Committee on Platform reported a list of legislative objectives, "the total abolition of the contract convict labor system" was plank number one.[1]

[1] When someone proposed a resolution of thanks to the legislature of New York State and certain other states for abolishing the contract system in their jurisdictions, considerable argument arose. Was it appropriate to thank a body of public servants for simply doing its duty? Finally, "on the theory that for a legislature to do its duty was, in a certain sense, a favor, and that thanks didn't cost much and might be productive of more favors when they were wanted," the resolution was approved.—*Chicago Daily News*, March 27, 1884, p. 1.

Besides the abolition of contract convict labor, the convention asked for fifteen other measures of law. The complete report of the Committee on Platform read as follows:

We, the representatives of the various trades and labor organizations of the State of Illinois, in Convention assembled, willing to sink all minor differences and partisanship by which the workers have heretofore been kept too long divided against each other, and loving our country and families, as we do, better than any party, uniting to secure legislation on the following points, which we deem just and necessary, present the following as coming within the scope of state legislation, assuring our law makers that our ballots and demands go hand in hand:

1. The total abolition of the contract convict labor system.

2. The establishment of boards of arbitration to settle disputes between employers and employes.

3. The enactment and enforcement of a law making eight hours a legal day's work, excepting in its operations those engaged in agricultural pursuits.

4. To fix the liability of employers for damages for loss of life or limb to the employe.

5. The enactment of an efficient apprenticeship law.

6. The prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age in workshops and factories.[1]

7. The adoption and enforcement of a compulsory educational system.

8. The more rigid enforcement of the laws relating to the ventilation of mines and the safety of miners, and the enactment of penalties for their violation.

9. The abolition of what is known as the conspiracy or LaSalle Black Law, and the passage of a statutory enactment declaring illegal all iron-clad contracts which deprive the workman of the privilege of membership in any peaceably-conducted trade and labor organization.

10. The relief of tax-payers on mortgaged real estate by giving a proportionate lien against the holders of mortgages for taxes paid.

11. Weekly payments by all corporations for labor performed the previous week, and the complete abolition of the "truck" system.

[1] *Amended by adding* "except as applied to Industrial Schools."

12. The abolition of land monopoly by non-resident holders.

13. To make it a criminal offense to gamble in or create corners on the necessaries of life.

14. The legal right of labor organizations, as such, to hold property and conduct co-operative business.

15. A more complete control of the railroads and waterways of the state as common carriers, in the interests of the people.

16. The appointment of inspectors of workshops and habitations, of food, drink, drugs, etc.

A. C. Cameron, *Chairman*
M. L. Crawford
George Neff
Mrs. O. A. Bishop
George H. Ryan
M. J. Curry
C. W. Boyce
J. F. Quinn
H. A. Coffeen
J. M. Hartzell
P. H. McLogan
H. W. Smith
Walter Perry

After considerable discussion these were adopted and became the legislative demands of organized labor in Illinois. Mr. A. C. Cameron proposed that, in order to make them effective, a committee of three should be appointed to present copies to the Republican and Democratic state conventions, asking to have these sixteen principles incorporated into the party platforms. In case they should be rejected by one party and adopted by the other, then the workingmen of the state would pledge themselves to cast their ballots for the candidates of that party which had acted favorably. Should both parties refuse to adopt the labor principles, then the chairman of an executive committee to be appointed by the Seamen's Hall Convention would stand instructed to re-

convene it for the purpose of placing independent legislative candidates in the field.[1]

Mr. Cameron's resolution evoked spirited debate. George Schilling regarded efforts to accomplish anything by going into the camp of either party as fruitless and advocated a labor ticket. A delegate replied that he, for one, "was not ready to subscribe to any such Communistic ideas." Mr. Quinn, of the Chicago stonecutters, was opposed to having anything in the shape of politics injected into the proceedings. H. A. Coffeen, of Danville, moved to strike out the word "legislative"; this in order to leave the convention free to put an entire ticket in the field in case neither Democrats nor Republicans complied with the labor demands. His amendment carried, and the amended resolution was then adopted.[2]

The chairman now proceeded to appoint the Executive Committee, and named H. A. Coffeen, Danville; A. C. Cameron, Chicago; J. W. Shepley, Morris; J. B. Murphy, Chicago; George Neff, Springfield; and C. Williamson, Bartonville. The committee then organized itself, making A. C. Cameron chairman and J. B. Murphy secretary.[3] These were the first executive officers to serve the Illinois State Federation of Labor—or rather, the organization which was to become the Illinois State Federation of Labor.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1884), p. 18. The Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly two years before had adopted this latter expedient, feeling that only by electing trade-union members to the legislature could it get "real labor legislation." These candidates were defeated in the elections of 1882.—E. C. Mittlemann, MSS on Illinois labor history prepared in connection with the *Centennial History of Illinois*, in possession of Professor E. L. Bogart, University of Illinois, chap. III, pp. 25 f.

[2] *Times*, March 28, 1884.

[3] *Proc.* (1884.)

[4] A. C. Cameron, who thus became the first executive head of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, was a veteran of many labor and reform movements. From 1864 to 1877 he edited a paper widely read in labor circles, the *Workingmen's*

Now addressing the wage-workers of the state, the convention recommended "that they oppose at the polls all members of the last Legislature who opposed any bill offered in the interest of labor.[1] But it neglected to suggest any means by which a wage-worker might know which of hundreds of bills in the legislature were in his interest and who had voted against them.

Advocate, and he, himself, was well known throughout the country. He took a prominent part in the first convention of the National Labor Union at Baltimore in 1866, representing the Chicago central body and the Illinois Grand Eight Hour League. There he composed the report favoring independent political action and was chairman of the committee which issued an *Address to the Workingmen of the United States* in July, 1867. When the National Labor Union went down to oblivion, Cameron was one of the seven men present at its last session (1872). The industrial Congress which next struggled through a few years admitted him unenthusiastically to a seat without a vote. In 1875 Cameron was one of the few prominent leaders present at the death of that organization. At Cleveland, during the same year, he helped to start the Greenback party.—Commons and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States*, II, 93, 113, 155, 162, 169.

As a representative of the National Labor Union, Cameron attended the 1869 Congress of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) at Basel, and there gave the impression that the workers' revolution was about to take place in the United States. He is described by a Socialist writer as "a bombastic individual who gave the most ridiculously exaggerated account of the strength of the movement in America."—Spargo, *Karl Marx*, p. 288.

The Workingmen's League of Illinois, which later became the Chicago Labor League and still later the Workingmen's Industrial Party of the United States, owed its existence chiefly to A. C. Cameron. This was about 1876.—*Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 445–46.

During the eighties Cameron was prominent in the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, where he represented Typographical 16. Nearly every Sunday he and T. J. Morgan, the Socialist, were pitted against each other. "Andy" Cameron, as he was called, was short of stature and had a sharp, quick way of debating. "His questions and answers were like needles—sharp pointed," says Richard Powers.—Interview.

A printer by trade, Cameron ran a little shop of his own. He also became editor of the *Inland Printer*, a trade journal, and was secretary of the Old-Time Printers. He died in 1892.—Interviews, Richard Powers and present publishers of the *Inland Printer*.

[1] *Proc.* (1884).

The work of the Seamen's Hall Convention neared the end. An auditing committee presented a report which showed total receipts of $107. In response to a communication from the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, H. A. Coffeen, J. P. McGinley, and George Schilling were authorized to attend the next convention of that organization as delegates from the Illinois State Labor Convention. The representatives of the Chicago press were thanked for their "fair, impartial and commendable reports of the proceedings of this Convention"; August Stirmel, A. C. Cameron, and George Schilling were appointed to revise and print the minutes. Then the delegates dispersed, resolving to assemble at Springfield on the second Tuesday in February, 1885, or at the call of the Executive Committee.[1]

POSTCONVENTION COMMENT

Both the *Times* and the *Inter-Ocean* among Chicago dailies considered the State Labor Convention significant enough to deserve extended editorial notice at their hands,[2] and these expressions of opinion throw an interesting sidelight on the labor federation activities of the day. Particularly, they show that the agitation of organized labor for social measures, which are now all but universally accepted, had to contend at first with the derision and opposition of many of the "best people," and "leaders of thought."

"What is called a state labor convention has been in session in this city several days," began the *Times*. "It might with more propriety have been called a convention of employees who work in gangs," for neither those laborers who work for themselves in their own shops nor the men who

[1] *Proc.* (1884).

[2] The comment of the latter occupied a full column in its issue of March 29, and the former gave almost as much space on the 30th.

work on farms were represented. Still, this select and audacious group of workmen proceeded to discuss what should be required of persons who should hereafter employ laborers, entirely ignoring the old maxim that it takes two to make a bargain. "The so-called labor convention may cause the employers of labor to hold a convention, though the proceedings may not be made public."

As for the demands made by the labor delegates, the *Times* went on to say, "An association of laborers may make such demands that no person will employ them." For instance, "An establishment operated by steam power and expensive machinery may be profitable if kept in operation ten hours in each day but unprofitable if it is run but eight." The labor convention asked for a child-labor law, but "some kinds of manufacturing are only profitable when the work, which is very light, is performed by children, who can afford to labor for smaller wages than adults." A child-labor law would close these establishments, "turning the children out of remunerative and often instructive employment," and perhaps causing them to lead idle if not vicious lives. "The anxiety manifested by the members of the State Labor Convention to have all persons under fifteen years of age kept constantly in school is not probably prompted by benevolence but by the selfish desire to prevent them from being competitors in certain branches of labor." Likewise, the demand for the entire abolition of contract convict labor is "a declaration of selfishness pure and simple."

The criticism of the *Inter-Ocean* was from a different angle. The labor platform it found "not quite explicit enough to enlighten the legislature." What can be done with convict labor which will be less oppressive than the present system to the wage-working class? Here the editor touched upon the very center of the convict labor problem and raised

a question which was to engage the attention of Illinois labor organizations for many years.

"When the workingmen recommend boards of arbitration to settle disputes between employer and employed," continued the *Inter-Ocean*, "they should state whether they refer to legal or economical disputes." If legal disputes, then, of course, they have recourse to the courts. But if economical then the labor convention ought to explain by what *modus operandi* an arbitrator can compel a man to work for less wages or a longer time than he wants to. And if an arbitrator cannot compel a workman to toil at what he thinks to be a losing rate, how can he compel an enterpriser or capitalist to invest money in wages to run a profitless enterprise?

As for the eight-hour day,

> a law making eight hours a legal day's work is very much like a law making three buckwheat cakes and a spoonful of hash a legal breakfast. The question which really determines whether workingmen can get the privilege of working for wages at all, whether for six, eight, ten, twelve, or fourteen hours, turns wholly upon the previous question whether any man owning the means of industry and having the capital out of which to pay wages can make a profit by employing the workmen at any price.

Compulsory education would be preposterous.

> What will you do with the farmer who keeps his children at work upon his farm, teaching them how to produce wealth, to be diligent, industrious, honest, and prudent, but not how to "read, write, and cipher"? . . . . Is he to be sent to jail along with thieves and prostitutes because he has his own idea of education? . . . . Are we to enforce a uniformity of education by persecution, as the Church of Rome and of Geneva once sought to enforce uniformity of worship?

In demanding that the legislature make it a criminal offense to gamble in or create corners on the necessaries of life the workingmen were "asking for legislation concerning matters which lie so far beyond their province that by no possibility can they have a very good knowledge of them."

"If the workingmen understood corners better," concludes the editor learnedly, "they would find that they might as well find fault with ships or plows or banks or elevators or railways as with 'corners.' "

Finally, there is this piece of advice as to the true methods by which wage-earners, collectively and individually, might hope to improve their conditions:

> The better the workingmen come to understand the complexities of industry the better will they perceive that the one fact which alone can confer and maintain the best conditions for workers *en masse* is such an activity and diversity of industries as will bring about the most active competition among employers for the hire of their labor. This they are silent about. The one thing which will confer upon each of them individually the greatest prosperity is to look upon the wages condition not as a necessity for life, but as a temporary stage only in life, from which the wage-worker is to emerge into a worker for profits. This too they omit to consider.

One reading these last two sentences today is bound to observe that the trade unionists of the eighties were better judges of the course of industrial evolution than was the editor.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE VICTORY

The Seamen's Hall Convention had adjourned with the understanding that its sixteen "Principles" would be presented to the Republican and Democratic state conventions for their indorsement, and that the votes of organized labor would be thrown to that party which acted favorably. Thereafter a committee composed of Mark L. Crawford, Charles W. Rowan, J. Pearson, William E. Carroll, and J. F. Quinn proceeded to carry this plan into effect. The first three visited the Republicans and reported back to the full committee that they had been received with scant courtesy, that their request for a straightforward declaration had been met with trickery, and that glittering generalities had been substituted for action on their sixteen demands. When the latter two and Mr. Crawford called on the Democrats they returned with a wholly different story. The Democrats, being the minority party, were anxious to please; nearly all the planks proposed by the State Labor Convention were covered satisfactorily in the Democratic platform, and in order to make assurance doubly sure, the political assembly suspended its rules and resolved unanimously that "the Illinois Democratic State Convention do hereby indorse all the declarations of principles adopted by the Illinois State Labor Convention, held at Chicago, March, 1884."

Having ascertained that the Democrats were more favorable than the Republicans to the demands of organized labor, the committee now drew up a detailed report of its dealings with both parties and turned it over to the Executive Committee appointed at Seamen's Hall. This narrative provides such an interesting and illuminating insight into

the ways of political parties with labor committees that it is reproduced at some length in the footnote below.[1] The

[1] Proceeding to Peoria, where the Republican State Convention was to meet, Messrs. Rowan, Crawford, and Pearson printed an "address" containing the sixteen planks of the State Labor Convention's "Declaration of Principles," and circulated it among the delegates. These demands, the Republicans were assured, "contain nothing of a communistic or agrarian character. But, while making this avowal, we assure this convention that they come from citizens who are terribly in earnest, who appreciate the power of the ballot, and who are determined to cast their votes in the future only for the candidates of that party which recognizes in a practical manner the interests of labor—whose actions correspond with their professions."

The chairman of the Republican State Central Committee promised the three labor spokesmen a hearing before the Committee on Platform; so they took up their post outside the room where the platform was being framed.

"We waited at their door about three hours," their report narrates, "and were surprised to learn from some of the committee that they had completed their work and were about to adjourn without hearing us. Having, as we felt, a good cause behind us, and with a desire to prevail upon them to either specifically favor or disapprove our platform, and not dodge it, we were audacious enough to force our way into the committee room, unasked, and demand to be heard. We were then informed that they had appointed a sub-committee with instructions to confer with us, and draft a plank that would be satisfactory to us. We met said sub-committee, and their chairman—who was also chairman of the full Committee on Platform—submitted to us for our approval . . . . alleged labor planks . . . . . We informed him, in plain and unmistakable words, that they did not satisfy us at all. We asked for no expressions of sympathy or friendship for the laboring classes, for that we always receive just before election—no 'glittering generalities.' But what the industrial classes did want, and would accept nothing less, was specific expressions on the sixteen declarations of principles adopted by the Illinois Labor Convention—or as many of them as the Republican party of Illinois endorsed. The chairman then said (and we will give his words verbatim): 'We will sit down together and draft a plank that will cover your entire platform and not leave the Democrats anything to swallow.' We did so. And owing to his seeming desire that we should all be pleased with the plank, he asked each member of our committee if we would be satisfied with it. We all told him that we would. He then said, as did others of his committee, that it was satisfactory to them, and that it would be substituted for the one we objected to. We left the committee-room feeling satisfied, and went to the convention to see how our plank was received. Imagine our surprise when this same gentleman, in reading the platform to the convention for its adoption, did not report the plank we had agreed upon a short time before, but reported in its stead the very identical planks that we had objected to, as totally meaningless and unsatisfactory."

After this "palpable piece of treachery," and owing to the fact that they

Executive Committee printed it in a sixteen-page pamphlet headed, "Workingmen, who are your friends in Illinois? *Address of the Executive Committee appointed by the State*

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were aware of the presence of several large employers of convict labor on the floor of the Republican Convention who had spent hundreds of dollars to be elected delegates, knowing that authorized representatives of the laboring class of Illinois were going to ask the abolition of the contract system, the subcommittee "was forced to the conclusion that these prison-contract employers, these enemies of labor, the men who would drag honest labor down to the level of convicts, have too great a hold on the Republican party of Illinois for the laborer to expect any consideration at its hands."

A similar subcommittee attended the Democratic State Convention, also at Peoria, and proceeded much as before. First they circulated a printed statement among the delegates. "Remember, gentlemen," read one of the paragraphs, "behind these requests are the ballots of the men who hold the balance of power in this state; and that that party which wilfully ignores the interests of the toiling masses has no right to expect their moral or political support. He who is not for us is against us, and that party—and that party only—which endorses our claims will receive our support at the ballot-box."

The chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee was most cordial. He asked the three labor men to come to the headquarters and present their platform before a number of leading Democrats of the state. They found a large number of gentlemen assembled there, and, after explaining each of the sixteen planks as best they could, showing the evils intended to be reached by them, they "were gratified to hear expressions of approval come from all parts of the room." To quote the subcommittee's report further: "As soon as the Committee on Platform was appointed we informed two of its members that we desired to be heard before the committee. We were sent for as soon as the committee was organized and granted all the time we desired. After presenting our case as best we could, we were about to retire, when we were requested by the committee to remain until the committee had disposed of our platform. In their discussion no opposition to any plank in our platform was manifest. Some, however, it was claimed were now covered by law, but the law was not enforced . . . . .

"When the Committee on Platform reported to the convention, we found nearly all our platform covered satisfactorily. After the convention had adopted its platform, to make 'assurance doubly sure,' a delegate read on the floor our address to the Illinois Democratic State Convention, the rules were suspended, and a motion that 'The Illinois Democratic State Convention do hereby endorse all the declarations of principles adopted by the Illinois State Labor Convention, held at Chicago, March, 1884,' was adopted without a dissenting vote." (Quotations are from the *Address* mentioned in the text, a copy of which has been preserved in the library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison.)

Labor Convention. Together with the Report of the Committee appointed to wait on the Republican and Democratic State Conventions. *Workingmen! Read This At Home,*" declaring that "it behooves every workingman who endorses the platform adopted by the Illinois State Labor Convention to vote and work for the election of the Democratic State Ticket." The Republicans had not only rejected the labor platform, added the Executive Committee, but many of the party's leading wire-pullers were interested in the perpetuation of the infamous convict contract-labor system,

> and to crown their infamy these creatures have prevailed on the penitentiary commissioners, since the meeting of the Democratic State Convention, to extend the term of their contracts to *eight years!* Can insult or injury go further?

The address concluded:

> For the first time, then, in the history of our state the campaign will be in a great measure fought on the issues presented by the industrial classes . . . . . Do your duty—redeem the promise made in the State Labor Convention. . . . . Throw partyism to the dogs, and vote only for those candidates who are openly and above board pledged to champion the interests of labor.

The state elections of 1884 resulted in a Republican gubernatorial victory, though the plurality of the Republican nominee, Richard J. Oglesby, was only 14,600, while Blaine, Republican candidate for president, carried Illinois by 25,122. In the General Assembly the Republicans beheld their control reduced to the narrow margin of one vote on the Senate side, while the Democrats actually acquired a majority of one in the House.[1] The political efforts of the Illinois State Labor Convention and its Executive Committee probably had considerable to do with the gains of the Democrats.

[1] *Chicago Daily News Almanac,* 1885.

When the second state labor convention met at Springfield in February, 1885, it renewed the demand made at Seamen's Hall for the "total abolition" of the contract convict labor system, and James F. Quinn, a trade unionist, introduced a bill to that end in the legislature. Supported by the Democrats and a few Republicans it passed the House, but lacked one vote in the Senate. Thereupon labor representatives framed a constitutional amendment prohibiting the contract system of prison labor and were successful in having the General Assembly submit it to a vote of the people. It was to come up in the fall elections of 1886.[1]

The Illinois State Labor Association, as it now called itself, met for its third convention at Decatur in June, 1886, and James F. Quinn, who attended as a delegate from the Stonecutters' Union of Chicago, presided over its sessions. The business of the convention revolved about the convict-labor question. Plans were laid for an active campaign in favor of the proposed constitutional amendment. The Executive Committee was instructed to prepare a circular for distribution throughout the state and through the press; it was authorized to send out three canvassers, two in the North and one in the South. Subsequently, committees waited upon the Republican and Democratic state conventions, as in 1884, but this time with only one demand—indorsement of the proposed convict-labor amendment. Both parties were induced to take favorable action, though the Republicans were charged with perfidy later in the campaign.[2] The State Labor Association spent about $350 in

[1] Report of A. C. Cameron to Decatur Convention of 1886, *Decatur Review*, June 2, 1886, and *Chicago Times*, same date.

[2] Cameron's report to 1887 convention.—*Illinois State Register*, January 26, 1887.

"In their State Conventions both Republican and Democratic parties endorsed the Constitutional amendment abolishing contract convict labor, called upon all their adherents to vote for the amendment, and by implication at least instructed

these and similar activities, of which $270 was raised by a special call for contributions.[1]

The convict labor amendment carried in the fall elections by twenty thousand votes, and the Illinois State Labor Association found itself victorious on its foremost demand, the demand which had called a state labor organization into being. The contracting out of convict labor was forever made illegal in Illinois.

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their committees to get out the party tickets as being 'for' the amendment. So far as we have been able to learn, the Democratic party in Illinois has acted in good faith in this matter. The Democratic State Central Committee have prepared their tickets with the words 'for the amendment' and not 'against' it. On the other hand, the Republican tickets have both 'for' and 'against' on their tickets, contrary to agreement, and in Bureau county, the home of the arch-enemy of honest labor and friend of prison contractors, Senator Whiting, ... all the Republican tickets are printed 'against the amendment,' giving no Republican a chance to vote for it. In all the rural districts where a bribed central committee could work this dodge against the unsuspecting farmers, the Republican tickets are to be printed 'against the amendment.' "—*Knights of Labor*, October 30, 1886.

Just on the eve of election a Republican circular flooded the state opposing the amendment. It said, "The demand to arrest our present successful prison management comes not from the tax-payers of Chicago, but mainly from the anarchists, communists and socialists of that city, who pay very little taxes, and are not noted for loving much labor either in prisons or elsewhere."—*Knights of Labor*, October 30, 1886.

[1] *Proc.* (1887), "Treasurer's Report."

CHAPTER III

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT, 1884–97

"The work of the Chicago convention was necessarily preliminary in its character," said Chairman A. C. Cameron in opening the second state labor convention at Springfield in February, 1885; "it is for this and subsequent authorized gatherings to erect the superstructure."[1] This the Springfield convention proceeded to do. It adopted a constitution, put on the dignity of a permanent organization, and became the Illinois State Labor Association. This constitution of 1885, printed in full below, is the first in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME

SEC. 1. This organization shall be known as the Illinois State Labor Association.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTS

SEC. 1. The objects of this Association are the encouragement and formation of trade and labor organizations and to secure legislation favorable to the interests of the industrial classes.

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

SEC. 1. The officers of the Association shall consist of a president, first and second vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer, and an executive committee of five members.

SEC. 2. The officers shall be elected the first day of the session, except the executive committee, who shall be elected the last day of the session. All officers shall be elected by ballot.

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SEC. 1. The president shall preside at the annual meeting, preserve order, and appoint all committees unless otherwise ordered by the Association.

[1] Where no source is cited for quotations from convention speeches, resolutions, and the like, see Appendix A, which lists the sources of information used for each convention.

SEC. 2. The first and second vice-presidents shall officiate in the absence of the president.

SEC. 3. The secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Association, receive all moneys and pay the same to the treasurer, taking his receipt therefor.

SEC. 4. The treasurer shall receive all moneys from the secretary, giving his receipt therefor, and disburse the same as ordered by the Association. He shall give sufficient bonds if required to the executive committee for the faithful performance of the duties of his office.

SEC. 5. The executive committee shall consist of five members who are authorized to execute the order of the Association and shall have jurisdiction of all matters affecting the industrial classes; after the adjournment of the Association, the secretary and treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the committee. The chairman or some member of the committee whom he may designate, shall be present, and open the annual and special sessions of the Association. The committee may call a special session of the State Association when it deems the circumstances warrant it. The committee shall encourage and assist in the promotion of trade and labor organizations in localities where none exist.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

The sessions shall be held annually, at such time and place as the Association may designate.

ARTICLE VI. REPRESENTATION

The Association shall be composed of delegates from the trades and district assemblies and labor organizations of the State of Illinois. Every organization is entitled to one delegate for each one hundred members or fraction thereof up to one thousand members. No organization is entitled to more than ten delegates.

ARTICLE VII. REVENUE

All labor associations of one hundred members or less shall be assessed two dollars per annum, and for every additional hundred or fractional part thereof, one dollar. All trade and district assemblies shall be assessed ten dollars.

ARTICLE VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Committee on Credentials.
2. Committee on Resolutions.
3. Committee on Legislation.
4. Committee on Ways and Means.
5. Committee on Platform.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Reading of minutes.
2. Report of special and standing committees.
3. Resolutions, communications and bills.
4. Welfare of the Association.
5. Adjournment.

It will be observed that the Illinois State Labor Association was organized somewhat on the analogy of a political party. It was hardly a continuous institution; it was more like a series of annual conferences. There was no definite membership; unions and Knights of Labor assemblies that wished to send delegates did so, and only those represented at the convention paid dues. The president of the association merely presided over the meeting which elected him; between conventions power resided in the executive committee of five, and the chairman of this committee was the real head of the organization. It was he who called the annual conventions to order on their opening days, and he who reported on the year's legislative work or made recommendations for the future.

The next important structural development took place in 1888. Before the Peoria convention of that year the Knights had broken with the organization. The trade unionists, under the leadership of the cigarmakers, reorganized the Illinois State Labor Association, rewrote the constitution, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and changed the name to Illinois State Federation of Labor.

The preamble for the remodeled constitution of 1888 was taken over almost bodily from that of the American Federation of Labor and expressed a purpose *permanently* to unite the trade unionists of the state by means of a *thorough* federation. This purpose found expression in the constitutional changes made at the time. For example, a more definite membership criterion was set up: "This Federation

shall be composed of delegates from such labor organizations as shall adopt this constitution." In 1889 the *Bloomington Pantagraph* mentions that "Cigar-makers' Union 41 and the Tailors' Union of Rock Island are affiliated, but have no delegates present." Evidently a distinction could now be made between membership in the federation and attendance at the convention. Other amendments made the president and the vice-presidents responsible heads of the organization throughout the year instead of mere presiding officers at an annual meeting; additional clauses enumerated their duties in detail. These were steps in the direction of a permanent and thorough federation.

Following the lead of the American Federation of Labor, which had decided that in view of the impending concerted movement for the eight-hour day on May 1, 1890, its Executive Council should have power to levy strike assessments, the Illinois State Federation of Labor now drew up a similar strike supporting amendment to its own constitution and had it ratified by referendum vote of its members.[1] Had there ever been any attempt to invoke this amendment, however, it is doubtful whether or not the local organizations would have acknowledged the right of the State Federation to levy an assessment upon them.[2] Thoroughness of federation was not to extend to the economic field.

By the end of the eighties the structural foundations of the Illinois State Federation of Labor were fairly well laid, and even some of the superstructure of which A. C. Cameron spoke in 1885 had been erected. But though the edifice had a framework it certainly lacked walls and a roof; the wind whistled unimpeded through its bare hulk. The mem-

[1] Communication from the Illinois State Federation of Labor in the "Minutes of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly," February 21, 1889; Constitution of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in *Proc.* (1890, Jacksonville convention).

[2] Interview, John C. Harding.

bership, instead of increasing, had declined almost to the point of extinction, and the year 1890 saw another crisis in the affairs of the Federation. This time reorganization came about through the printers. A new group of men assumed the task of upbuilding the Illinois State Federation of Labor and carried it forward—under peculiar difficulties which we shall notice later—to the close of the first period in its history, about 1897. This occasioned further constitutional changes, which we can summarize as development in the direction of (1) more thorough affiliation, (2) better financial support, and (3) a year-round federation.

MORE THOROUGH AFFILIATION

A "Committee on Welfare of the Order" in 1891 reported "more thorough affiliation" as one of the great needs of the Federation, and except for certain periods of political turmoil the next six years were marked by continuous efforts to increase the membership of the organization. "The Illinois State Federation of Labor has enjoyed a steady growth during the past year," reported the officers in 1896; "since the Peoria convention (1895) some twenty-five new unions have been admitted. . . . The Federation now embraces over one hundred labor bodies in good standing.[1]

It is significant that in this decade of the nineties unions began to *affiliate* with the State Federation, not merely to send delegates to the conventions. Secretary Walter Bush commented in 1896 that

> although we have a good sized delegation here today, it would be much larger if it were not for the present hard times; many organizations showing that they are very much in earnest by paying up their per capita and in expressing their regret at being unable to send delegates, but pledging themselves to help carry out any movement which this convention may see fit to put on foot.[2]

[1] Official call for 1896 convention, in *Eight-Hour Herald*, October 6, 1896.

[2] *Proc.* (1896), p. 12.

Furthermore, the nineties saw the State Federation become a real *state* organization. During the first ten years of its existence it was fathered by the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, and an outstanding fact in the makeup of nearly all the early conventions was the preponderance of Chicago delegates.[1] The dominant influence of Chicago in the state labor movement of the time is even more strikingly shown in what may be called the steadying personnel of the Federation. Out of twenty-seven men who were present at two or more state conventions during the eighties, nineteen were from Chicago. Of the nine who were present at three or more, five came from Chicago.[2]

[1] See Appendix B on "The Growth of the Illinois State Federation of Labor."

[2] There was only one man who attended four out of the seven conventions of the eighties; he was Jacob Roedersheimer, of Jacksonville, who represented the Trade and Labor Assembly of that city and Cigarmakers' Local 114.

The following attended three conventions during the eighties, representing the organizations indicated:

Chicago: A. C. Cameron, Typo. 16, C. T. & L. A.; William Gleason, L. A. 1307, C. T. & L. A.; William H. Kliver, C. T. & L. A.; William H. Muldoon, Coopers' L. A., C. T. & L. A.; W. E. Tomson, Wood Working Machine Hands L. A. 8511.

Springfield: Joseph Farris, L. A. 271, S. T. & L. A.; George Neff, S. T. & L. A.; James W. Smith, S. T. & L. A.

The following attended two conventions during the eighties, representing the organizations indicated:

Chicago: Fred Beling, Cigarmakers' 14; Leo P. Dwyer, D. A. 24; Louis Engel, Cigarmakers' 14; John Foley, C. T. & L. A.; Louis Hartman, C. T. & L. A.; John W. LaVine, Cigarmakers' 14; Mrs. E. McLogan, C. T. & L. A.; J. B. Murphy, C. T. & L. A.; George Rodgers, Iron Molders' 23; Albert Schaper (Schafer?) Cigarmakers' 14; George A. Schilling, Coopers' L. A., C. T. & L. A.; August Stirmel, Cigarmakers' 14; Robert T. Swallow, C. T. & L. A.; James F. Quinn, Stonecutters.

Springfield: John L. Phillips, S. T. & L. A.

Decatur: Bert Stewart, Workingmen's Club.

Peoria: George Beckler, Cigarmakers' 118.

Bloomington: T. S. Schofield, Knights of Labor.

(Compiled from credentials lists, or, where these are not available, from names mentioned in press accounts of the proceedings.)

During the nineties, however, Chicago ceased to supply a majority of the delegates, and the régime of the downstaters from 1895 to 1897 established the complete independence of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. Nevertheless, and naturally enough, the labor movement of Chicago has never ceased to play an important part in the Federation's proceedings.

BETTER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

"The Israelites may have made bricks without straw," Mr. Cameron had said in his Springfield speech in 1885, "but even that undertaking was not a more difficult one than the task of running a state labor organization without the sinews of war." The State Labor Association did succeed in raising some $200 for its campaign on the convict-labor amendment, but that was through special contributions. The regular annual income of the state organization was very meager during its early years. An itemized report in 1890 shows total receipts of $72.07 and total expenditures of $75.85; and almost two-thirds of the receipts and more than two-thirds of the expenditures were connected with the printing and sale of the proceedings of the last convention. Obviously, there were no funds to support any great amount of legislative work.

The 1885 constitution assessed each organization $2.00 per annum for the first hundred members and $1.00 for every additional hundred; that of 1887 added that "no organization shall be assessed more than ten dollars." In 1888 the principle of per capita taxation was introduced, with dues of 2 cents per member per annum from each affiliated union; but still no organization was to pay less than $2.00 nor more than $10.00. Trades assemblies, central unions, or councils were taxed $3.00 for every delegate sent to the convention,

and might send any number of delegates up to ten.[1] This arrangement yielded very little revenue.

The new men who came in about 1890 determined to make the State Federation an influential body, and one of the first things they realized was that it must have money. In 1891 the per capita tax was increased to 6 cents per annum, or ½ cent per month; no organization, however, was required to pay for more than two thousand members. An entrance fee of $2.00 was introduced.[2] These provisions remained in force until 1895.

In the latter year Secretary Walter Groves called attention in his report to the "want of material funds to accomplish anything practical." which impeded the Federation. He said,

> Of what use is it to pass sounding resolutions on important matters when on the adjourning of the convention there is not sufficient money in the treasury to pay for the necessary postage. The per capita tax is but barely sufficient to pay the expenses of the convention and necessary printing and stationery used by the officers, to say nothing of traveling expenses on business of the Federation.[3]

He suggested that a fund should be raised to support a representative at the state capitol throughout the entire session of the legislature. President Riefler also urged an increase in per capita tax.[4]

Accordingly, the revenue section of the constitution was again revised. The initiation fee was abolished; central bodies were assessed $10.00 annually, regardless of the number of delegates sent to conventions, though they were henceforth limited to five. The capitation tax remained ½ cent per member per month, payable quarterly, but the provision that a local need not pay on more than two thou-

[1] *Proc.* (1890, Jacksonville), p. 31.

[2] Constitution of 1892, in *Labor Gazette*, 1893, p. 164.

[3] *Peoria Herald*, October 10, 1895.

[4] *Ibid.*, October 12, 1895.

sand members was removed. Furthermore, quarterly dues became payable in advance, and it was specified that affiliated unions must be fully paid up before the credentials of their delegates would be accepted at the conventions.[1] Organizations not previously affiliated with the Federation might send delegates upon payment of one quarter's per capita fee in advance.[2]

As a result of these improvements, and with the growth of interest in the Federation on the part of local unions, the income of the organization gradually became larger and more steady. President Riefler, in his annual report at the end of this period (1897), was able to announce that "the revenues derived from the per capita tax . . . are now ample to defray all ordinary expenses. The indebtedness inherited by the present officials has all been discharged, and for the first time in its history, the Federation has a surplus in its treasury." "This," he said, "is largely owing to the zeal and faithfulness of Secretary Bush.[3]

However, even with this improvement in condition, the financial strength of the State Federation during the nineties seems very small when compared to that of the same organization today. Secretary Bush says,

> The revenue was so small that there was nothing to put up a fight on. The unions began to realize that if they expected to get anything from the General Assembly they had to do it through the State Federation where they could present a united front, and as more unions came in its power grew larger. But you can't run an organization without finances, and the State Federation didn't get any real power until it got some per capita taxes coming in—when the miners and other unions began to pay dues.[4]

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Constitution of 1896, in *Proc.* (1896), p. 11.

[3] *President's Address* (1897), printed separately.

[4] Interview, Walter S. Bush. Some idea of the scale of expenditures may

TOWARD A YEAR-ROUND FEDERATION

From a series of annual conventions to a continuous organization governed by an annual convention but functioning the year round was the direction of development of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. A part of this development occurred in the nineties. Thus, the Jacksonville convention of 1890 voted to pay its secretary, in addition to the $3.00 per day he received during the convention, $25.00 extra for services from the time of adjournment until the next annual meeting. Should he be required to devote more time to the work of the organization than might be justly remunerated by that amount he might present a bill for more. Thus the State Federation of Labor acquired its first "salaried" officer! Before the close of this period the secretary's allowance for interconvention services had become $100 per year, and while the president received no salary he

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be gained from the following report made in 1893 (*Proc.* (1893), p. 26; figures here are rounded):

EXPENDITURES

Printing proceedings and shipping	$120
Other printing	50
Delegate badges	25
A. F. of L. taxes and delegate expenses	70
Secretary's salary	100
President's expenses	150
Secretary's expenses, postage, etc	30
Total expenditures	$545

Receipts for the same year totaled $716, of which $216 came from per capita tax, delegate fees, and initiation charges. Of the per capita tax itself, Cigar Makers' Union No. 14, Chicago, paid $48, and Typographical 16, Chicago, paid $36; together these two big unions paid more than half the per capita. The largest item in the receipts for 1893 was "From J. W. Connorton for *Labor Gazette* Privileges . . . . $500," but this was exceptional.

About $314 in new revenue was collected in 1894—*Proc.* (1894), p. 139. By 1897 this had increased to $425.—*Report* of Secretary-Treasurer Walter S. Bush, 1897, printed separately. The latter amounts represent dues paid in regularly by a comparatively large number of organizations, which indicates that the Federation was attaining a firm financial footing.

was able to spend a modest amount on traveling expenses when he gave his time gratis to Federation business.

The official governing body of the Federation between conventions was the Executive Board. It met occasionally to settle a dispute or to take official action on some policy of the officers, but the organization was too poor to afford many meetings of the Board.[1] Most of its affairs had to be handled by correspondence, and the president or secretary carried on most of its activities between conventions.

In addition to making progress in its internal organization, real affiliation of the Illinois State Federation of Labor with the American Federation of Labor dates from the nineties. The Seamen's Hall Convention of 1884, it will be remembered, elected three delegates to attend the Federation of Trade Convention that was to meet in Chicago the following October. The three presented their credentials, "but as no provision had been made to pay the whole of the per capita tax, all except one were withdrawn." J. P. McGinley was seated. His name appeared on the credentials list as a representative of the "Illinois State Federation."[2]

For nearly a decade thereafter the Illinois state organization sent no delegates to national conventions. The Federation of Trades became the American Federation of Labor in 1886, and in 1888 the Illinois State Federation of Labor applied for a charter. It paid a charter fee of $5.00 in February, 1888, and bought $4.00 worth of supplies in April

[1] R. W. Schuch says, "We members of the Executive Board got our expenses and maybe a little more, but we lost some wages. This was our contribution; the Federation was poor." Usually, he says, the local union of carpenters contributed toward his expenses when attending Executive Board meetings; "The Federation was weak, and the locals came to the rescue. The Carpenters and others figured that it was worth something to them to have their representatives on committees so that they could get direct reports."—Interview.

[2] *Proceedings*, Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada (1884).

of the same year, according to the records of the American Federation of Labor, but made no further payments. Two years later the Quincy convention of 1890 took the rather surprising step of renouncing the affiliation which had been effected in 1888, "on the ground that all the organizations belonging to the State Federation are represented in the American Federation by delegates from their International or National Unions."[1] "It was largely a question of money," says John C. Harding.[2] But the following year at Alton the delegates voted to reaffiliate, and a congratulatory telegram from President Samuel Gompers, taken to mark the renewal of friendly relations between the national and state bodies, was read amid great enthusiasm.[3] The Illinois State Federation now sent a delegate—in the person of one William C. Pomeroy—to the next American Federation of Labor convention, which met at Birmingham. There he was refused a seat because the Illinois Federation owed four years of back dues.[4] By 1892, however, the Illinois State Federation of Labor had attained good standing in the American Federation of Labor, and it was represented in the convention of that year by Joseph A. Hopp, of Ottawa.[5] Since then its affiliation has been continuous.

[1] *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890.

[2] Interview.

[3] *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 13, 1891.

[4] American Federation of Labor *Proceedings* (1891), p. 10–11.

[5] *Ibid.* (1892), p. 7.

CHAPTER IV

DISRUPTING FORCES OF THE EIGHTIES

We have seen that while the enthusiastic beginning at Chicago in 1884 was followed by several fairly well-attended conventions and by a notable legislative victory, the Illinois State Federation of Labor was on the verge of extinction by 1890. In fact, at the Jacksonville convention in January of that year there were only twelve delegates present, barely enough to fill all the offices.[1] Likewise, the public influence of the Federation at the end of the eighties seems to have been negligible. It is hard to find any mention of its conventions in the press. The Chicago papers, which had paid a good deal of attention to earlier sessions, accorded those of 1889 and 1890 a scant two or three inches of print, when they mentioned them at all. Even to the labor press of the time, the State Federation Convention was hardly as important as a political meeting. The leaders who revived the Illinois State Federation of Labor in the nineties always referred to the preceding years in its history as "the dark ages," for they could find no records, and nobody seemed to know anything about what the Federation had done.[2]

Why was this state labor organization, launched so auspiciously in 1884, practically dead by 1890? It is apparent that Illinois local unions and central bodies at the end of the decade could not or would not co-operate to support an active state federation. Why? The answer is to be found in three major disrupting forces which shook the

[1] It is an actual fact that every delegate went home an officer of some kind in the Illinois State Federation of Labor; nobody had to be disappointed.—*Proc.* (1890).

[2] Interview, William C. Pomeroy.

Illinois labor world of the late eighties. The struggle between Knights of Labor and trade unionists, Haymarket and the anarchist hysteria, and the failure of independent labor political movements were at once the dominant episodes in the Illinois State Federation's history during these years and the reasons for its decline.

KNIGHTS OF LABOR VS. TRADE UNIONS

An impending conflict between the two widely different systems of labor organization, represented by the Knights of Labor on the one hand and the trade unions lately united in the American Federation of Labor on the other, broke out in 1886 in the East and spread westward. The storm center was the cigar-making trade, and the bone of contention, the blue label.

About 1880 the Cigarmakers' International Union had adopted a blue label to distinguish union-made goods from those made in tenement houses, by Chinese, or under other non-union conditions. The label was a success, and in a short while there was a large demand for it. For a time there were negotiations looking toward a merger of the Cigarmakers' Union with the Knights of Labor, but these broke down when Grand Master Workman Powderly and his aides refused to agree to a plan which would have preserved the identity of the Cigarmakers' Union within the Order. Later the Knights organized a few cigar shops into Knights of Labor assemblies and moved to popularize a white label of their own to appear on boxes of cigars made by Knights of Labor members. The International charged that the Knights were receiving "scab" cigarmakers rejected by trade union locals; it refused to recognize the white label as marking "fair" goods;[1] and a feud developed which rapidly grew in bitterness.

[1] Morgan Files clippings from a Chicago paper dated January 28, 1887; *Report of Industrial Commission* (1901), XVII, 23.

The Decatur convention of the Illinois State Labor Association in 1886 adopted a conciliatory attitude. It telegraphed good wishes to the Knights of Labor Convention then in session at Cleveland and passed a resolution which expressed the hope that the breach between trade unions and Knights would soon be healed. But friction was arising on other scores as well as the cigarmakers' label. A resolution introduced by the Typographical delegates at the same convention showed how things were drifting. It denounced "rat" organizations composed of printers who had been expelled from the International Typographical Union and asked the Knights of Labor Executive Board to withhold its sanction from such groups.[1]

By 1887 the breach had widened, and delegates from the Cigarmakers' Union came down to the Springfield convention determined to force the issue. Knights and trade unionists were almost evenly divided in numbers, as they had been in previous conventions, but now a tension divided the two factions. "It was evident to the most casual observer," wrote a newspaper reporter, that "a state of feeling was pervading the assembly that needed but a word to fan the smouldering fire of excitement into flame."[2] Late in the afternoon of the second day, after hours of strenuous argument over the platform and over Haymarket resolutions, Frederick Beling, of Chicago, moved to indorse the blue label of the Cigarmakers' International Union. "This was the match that fired the powder magazine, and the explosion came near disrupting the convention."

The Knights were on their feet in an instant with an amendment to include the seal of their order, thus indorsing both. The verbal fireworks lasted two full hours, and

[1] *Knights of Labor*, June 5, 1886; also *Decatur Review* and *Chicago Times*, see citation in Appendix A.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, see citation in Appendix A.

adjournment was delayed until seven o'clock.[1] In the end, the Knights were "knocked out by a majority of three votes," and the champions of the blue label rejoiced in a hard earned victory.[2] "The general sentiment of the delegates," commented the *Illinois State Register*, "is that the gauntlet thrown down by the Cigarmakers' Union . . . means war to the knife between the Knights of Labor and the trade unions in this state and that the conflict will not cease until one or the other is conquered."

In vain the convention protested next day that the press had misstated the situation when it reported that there was a conflict between the Knights and the trade unionists present. It demanded a correction, but a few moments later Richard Powers rose to suggest that perhaps this action was a bit unjust to some members of the press. He had been threatened by a reporter present, he said, that if the resolution just adopted were allowed to stand his own speech of the previous day upon the blue label would be printed as proof that the alleged conflict did exist. He was not moved by this threat, but desired that justice should be done. On his motion the rules were suspended to give the newspapermen a chance to defend themselves, and thereafter a motion to

[1] Delegates Farris, DeVeara, and Boudinot, of Springfield Knights of Labor assemblies, Rohrback and Dwyer, of Chicago Knights of Labor assemblies, and Gleeson and Kliver, from the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, spoke in favor of indorsing both labels. Engel, Sandusky, and Swain of cigarmakers' locals in Chicago and Springfield, with Powers of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, and Smith and Radcliffe, of the Springfield Trade and Labor Assembly, supported the original motion.

[2] A Chicago paper reported that, "The members of the Cigarmakers' International Union were jubilant yesterday over their victory in the State Labor Assembly. . . . . The union in this city issues about 150,000 labels per month. The scale of prices of the Knights of Labor for cigarmakers is somewhat lower than the union scale, and this is one of the main points of the union opposition to the Knights' label and schedule. The action of the State Assembly has greatly widened the breach between the two factions."—Unidentified clipping in Morgan Files, dated January 28, 1887.

reconsider was carried with only one man voting no. The convention had to content itself with a declaration to the effect that the conflict over the blue label had ended when the vote was decided—which was no more true than the first resolution, as events proved.

Cigarmakers, returning home, had the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly print ten thousand circulars announcing the indorsement of the blue label by the State Labor Association.[1] In December, Grand Master Workman Powderly, of the Knights, entered the Illinois struggle by ordering the Knights of Labor co-operative cigar factory in Chicago to cease using the blue label of the International and to use the white Knights of Labor label instead.[2] The result was a strike of the union men.[3]

From this time there was open warfare, and the Knights disappeared from the State Labor Association. When the next convention met at Peoria a few weeks later (January 10, 1888) the cigarmakers were on hand in force, with about ten supporting delegates from the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly. They put through a resolution which not only indorsed the blue label, but declared the Knights of Labor label a fraud and set forth the International's side of the struggle to the extent of seven hundred words. The secretary of the convention was directed to forward a copy to every labor union in the state, together with a facsimile of the blue label. Furthermore, as we already know, the Peoria convention voted to take out a charter from the American Federation of Labor and thus definitely alienated the Knights.

Reverberations of the State Federation's actions were heard in Chicago, where it precipitated a split in the Trade

[1] "C. T. & L. A. Minutes," May 1, 1887.

[2] *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 473.

[3] *Chicago Times*, January 10, 1888.

and Labor Assembly. Harnessmakers' L. A. 1835, Knights of Labor, denounced the stand of the state body and asked the Trades Assembly to repudiate the report of its delegates. This it refused to do; whereupon District Master Workman George Schilling, of District Assembly 24, issued an order requiring all local assemblies under its jurisdiction to withdraw from the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly. The central body countered with a resolution that "should District Assembly 24 refuse to withdraw its obnoxious order, the Trades Assembly shall consider such refusal a declaration of war upon the trade unions of this city"; and the Committee on Organization was instructed to visit all Knights of Labor locals for the purpose of bringing them into the American Federation of Labor.[1] Many local assemblies reorganized into trade unions and continued in the Trades Assembly, but with the disintegration of the Knights immense numbers of men, especially among the unskilled, went out of the movement entirely.[2] The Chicago central body, which was also the main support of the state body, was greatly weakened for a time by the departure of the Knights. But it began to lead an independent existence, and when the labor party flurries died down in the following year it commenced to grow again.

The same was true of the State Federation. That the Knights of Labor trade union quarrel and the disintegration of the Knights account for the decline in attendance at the State Federation convention of 1889 is shown by the table in the footnote below.[3] The absence of the Knights does not account, however, for the further decrease in 1890. That must be explained in terms of the general confusion in the

[1] *Labor Enquirer*, April 28, 1888, "Morgan Scrapbook," (University of Chicago); "C. T. & L. A. Minutes," April 15, 1888.

[2] *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 473–74.

[3] The types of organizations represented in state labor conventions in Illinois, 1884–90, were as given in the following table:

labor movement, the after-effects of Haymarket, and the misfortune of Labor-party projects.

HAYMARKET: ANARCHISM AND SUPPRESSION

In 1884 the Federation of Trades had designated May 1, 1886, as the date on which laboring men of the United States and Canada, by concerted action, were to inaugurate the eight-hour day. As that date approached workingmen flocked into the organized labor movement in unprecedented numbers, the enthusiasm of the leaders and the rank and file was boundless, employers of labor became increasingly uneasy, and police officials prepared for trouble. In Chicago there was another element in this seething situation: For some years a group of anarchists, who espoused without reserve the use of force, had been preaching their doctrines by word of mouth at public meetings on the lake front, in local unions, and through radical papers and pamphlets.

In this intellectual and emotional setting Chicago workingmen embarked on the eight-hour movement of 1886. "As May Day approached, the tension all over the city of Chicago increased. Squads of police guarded the larger factories and galloped unexpectedly through quarters where laboring men assembled."[1] But the day came and passed peacefully enough. Results differed in the various trades; "in a few trades the eight-hour day with ten hours' pay had already

	City Centrals		Knights of Labor		Trade Unions		
Year	No. Organizations	No. Delegates	No. Organizations	No. Delegates	No. Organizations	No. Delegates	No. Trades
1884...	3	8	36	45	23	47	12
1885*...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1886...	4	12	6	6	8	9	7
1887...	3	16	11	12	4	7	2
1888*...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1889...	5	9	0	0	6	9	3
1890...	3	6	0	0	6	6	4

*No Data.

[1] *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 168

been granted, in others the eight-hour day with eight hours' pay was now inaugurated, while still more compromised on a nine-hour day with nine hours' pay." But out on the "Black Road" leading to the McCormick harvester works trouble was brewing; police and Pinkerton detectives hovered about the place. On May 3 there came a clash; 150 policemen appeared on the scene; several workers were killed and a score or so wounded. That night thousands of circulars appeared throughout the city with the message: "Revenge! Revenge! Workmen to arms!" and a great mass-meeting at Haymarket Square was called for the evening of May 4 "to denounce the latest atrocious act of the police."[1]

The Haymarket meeting proceeded peaceable enough, and after some hours of speech-making appeared to be breaking up. Mayor Harrison, who had attended, stopped at a nearby police station where reserves were being held and informed Inspector Bonfield that no violence need be feared, that the meeting had not been of an incendiary character, and that the people were leaving. A few minutes later, for some unaccountable reason, Bonfield at the head of 125 policemen appeared at the meeting and ordered it to disperse. "Almost simultaneously there was a thundering explosion; a bomb burst among the policemen, killing one and fatally wounding several others. The police fired wildly into the fleeing crowd, killing and wounding many—and the 'Haymarket riot' was over."[2]

The public, fanned into hysteria by the newspapers, demanded revenge upon the anarchists. Out of many arrests eight men were selected to stand trial, not as throwers of the bomb—for he remained unknown—but as anarchists,

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 170, quoting from revenge circular, Thomas J. Morgan files.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 170. In the above paragraphs liberal use has been made of the excellent account in the *Centennial History of Illinois*, prepared by Agnes Wright Dennis and Professor E. L. Bogart.

who, by the written and spoken word, had incited violence. After a trial lasting eight weeks and conducted in a frenzied atmosphere of hysterical fear the men were found guilty of murder, though none of them were proved to have thrown the bomb, and Parsons was not even present when the tragedy happened. One, Oscar Neebe, was sentenced to fifteen years in prison, the other seven to death. The sentences of Michael Schwabe and Samuel Fielden were commuted to life imprisonment; Adolph Fischer, George Engle, and Albert R. Parsons were hanged, and Louis Lingg committed suicide.[1]

The echoes of Haymarket were heard in state labor conventions for many years. That of 1886, meeting not quite a month after the bomb was thrown, at first declined to consider a resolution by George Neff, of Springfield, which condemned the anarchists and their inflammatory appeals but also scored the capitalists and corporations who had imported semibarbarians from the hotbeds of European anarchism in order to break down standards of American labor. "It is at this time unwise to pass or even discuss any such resolution on account of the already excited state of the public mind," said the Committee on Resolutions, and "believing in the efficacy of the law, especially when poor men have to come under its disciplinary influences," it reported the subject as "foreign to the business for which this assembly has been convened." Later, evidently feeling that it must preserve the convention from any suspicion of anarchist sympathies, the committee brought in a very much emaciated edition of the original resolution. It did not mention the Chicago tragedy specifically, but simply condemned inflammatory speech-making, while recognizing the right of all men to hold public meetings for lawful purposes. This brought George Schilling to his feet; he defended the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

anarchists and laid the blame for the "riot" on the police, whom he characterized as the worst anarchistic organization he knew of. "Messrs. Tomson of Chicago, Neff of Springfield and Stewart of Decatur, all made vehement speeches repudiating any affiliation with red-flag sentiments, and the resolution went through with a rush."

In the interval before the next convention, held in January, 1887, there was time for calmer thought, and some of the first panic-inspired verdicts were modified. As early as July 17, the *Knights of Labor*, a weekly published in Chicago, which had been as vehement as any in denouncing anarchism and commending the police, was remarking that "from recent developments it looks as though Inspector Bonfield is the man who ought to run away, as he appears to be primarily responsible for the riot;" and the following week:

> The first sensations of the terrible tragedy of May 4, were so revolting to all law-abiding citizens that there was but one expression of condemnation against the men now on trial as the supposed originators and perpetrators of the foul crime; but as the facts are gradually developed, there is a question in the minds of independent and conservative thinkers whether there are not some men fully as culpable as the so-called anarchists.[1]

In December, six weeks before the Springfield convention of 1887, the same paper asserted that "public opinion has turned completely around regarding the eight convicted anarchists of Chicago within the past few months."[2]

A resolution now came before the state convention "that the public peace, as well as justice, demands that a new trial should be granted, that a more impartial and dispassionate sifting of the evidence be secured." The conviction of the anarchists, recited this document, was "produced by class hatred and the clamor of a vindictive press." Joseph Farris

[1] *Knights of Labor*, July 17, 24, 1886.

[2] *Ibid.*, December 4, 1886.

and delegates Lum, Beling, and Sandusky spoke in favor of the resolution, and the latter wanted in addition to condemn the man who, in his opinion, was responsible for the riot, Inspector Bonfield. George Neff argued that a bad foreign element was gaining ground in the country; that the verdict in the anarchist case was a just one; and that those who would place the red flag before the American flag ought to leave the country. His opposition was reinforced by Richard Powers, James W. Smith, and A. C. Cameron, who read from the constitution to show that the subject did not properly come within the objects of the association. After a heated debate and considerable wrangling, the resolution was declared out of order.

Thus, the Haymarket affair was not allowed to come before the State Labor Association officially, save for the general denunciation of inflammatory speech-making in 1886. The state organization thereby sought to avoid trouble, though it was not able to prevent sharp dissensions over that policy. In 1888 at Peoria no mention was made of the matter. Of the eight convicted anarchists, Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe had been sent to prison, and the others were dead; the storm appeared to have subsided. The following year, with public sentiment less inflamed and with the old conservative leaders absent from the convention, the State Federation declared that the three anarchists in prison had not received a fair trial; and it appointed a committee to use all honorable means to secure their release. The last act in this drama was the election with the aid of labor votes of the liberal governor, John P. Altgeld, who, after examining all the evidence carefully, concluded that the judge in the anarchist trial had shown bias; that the jury was packed; that the jurors were not competent; that the trial was not a legal trial; and that the defendants were not guilty of the crime charged in the indictment. He said so in a message

announcing the pardon of the three prisoners still living, and by this courageous act of justice brought upon his own head a torrent of vilification which hastened him to his grave.[1]

Much more important in its effect upon the State Federation than the discussions of the Haymarket affair in its conventions was the indirect reaction of the catastrophe upon the labor movement of the state.

In the first place, the Haymarket explosion brought about the virtual collapse of the eight-hour movement and attached a label of anarchy to all labor organizations which it took them years to shake off. The bomb, said the *Knights of Labor*,[2]

> caused a revulsion of feeling against the eight hour agitators and actually ended the struggle among a great number of trades and occupations . . . . . A reign of terror came upon the "agitators." Tommy Morgan and other speakers did not dare to speak or write in the cause of shorter hours, and the movement then subsided. . . . .[3]

The panic stricken public made little distinction between anarchists, socialists, trades unionists, and Knights of Labor. The editor of the same weekly in August of 1886 complains,

> How often must the workingmen as a class deny their connection or sympathy with anarchy? It does seem as though the press at large has taken upon itself the task of convicting workingmen of socialism, anarchism, communism, and all the other isms society is heir to, regardless of their denials or protests, and it is high time that wholesale misrepresentation ceased.[4]

In vain he explained that what workingmen really wanted

[1] See Dell, in *Chicago: Its History and Its Builders*, II, 405; Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*.

[2] January 26, 1889.

[3] "The remarkably small percentage of successful strikes in 1886, both of men organized and unorganized, was due in no small degree to the fact that they occurred mostly in Chicago, were inaugurated to secure the eight-hour work-day, and this whole movement collapsed and was brought to failure by the Haymarket tragedy." —Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report* (1888), p. 213.

[4] *Knights of Labor*, August 28, 1886.

was shorter hours, abolition of the convict contract system, and abolition of child labor.

In the second place, the reaction from Haymarket gave occasion for the enactment of legislation distinctly unfavorable to labor organizations, hampering their activities and making agitation dangerous. Such measures were the Cole Anti-Boycott Law and the Merritt Conspiracy Law, two new statutes which joined the long-standing LaSalle Black Laws in the list of grievances of labor in 1886.[1]

In the third place, "it was the Haymarket bomb of May 4, 1886, that precipitated the political movement of this and the few following years."[2]

INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION, 1886–90

Anarchist hysteria had turned against labor organizations in general, killing the eight-hour movement and resulting in restrictive legislation against the boycott. "The strike and the boycott have failed," labor reformers said, "the ballot is our only salvation."[3] "Labor felt that the tragedy of the bomb was laid at its door only to discredit it in its economic demands, and it turned to politics to save

[1] The relation of the anarchist scare to such legislation is shown by the following in the *Knights of Labor*, April 16, 1887: "Intelligent and well-informed workingmen know that it was Albert Currlin's speech, in which he advised men to arm themselves, that did more to insure the passage of the Merritt conspiracy bill than any other one thing; they know that it was Currlin's editorial circulated in Washington that settled the question as to a military post in Chicago. When Currlin was told of these things he simply said: 'All right. Let them grind us down, I'm willing; the more they grind us down the sooner they will bring on the social revolution.' We submit that the rank and file of workingmen in this country do not care to be crushed in order to further any bloody schemes Mr. Currlin may have on his program." Albert Currlin was the radical socialist editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*.

[2] E. B. Mittleman, "Chicago Labor in Politics, 1877–96," *Journal of Political Economy*, XXVIII, 417.

[3] Quotation from a preamble adopted by the Illinois State Federation of Labor in 1888.

itself."[1] There were other causes contributing to a Labor party venture. "It was in the air; there was a break-up of old lines of thought, hardly realized at the time," says George Schilling, "Henry George and such men knew it, but with the rest it was largely unconscious."[2] Furthermore, organized labor had accumulated a distrust of old party methods and promises.[3] Finally, the remnants of financial questions left over from a previous decade provided material for minority parties; the political movement of the eighties was impregnated with greenbackism dressed up in new forms.[4] The main cause of the resort to politics, however, was that mentioned first, the fact that the eight-hour movement had been balked by the Haymarket bomb.[5]

The 1886 convention of the State Labor Association met so soon afterward that no political plan had crystallized, and it did nothing toward independent political action. Chicago

[1] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 418. "The political movement of the eighties came mostly out of the Haymarket situation and the eight hour movement," says George Schilling.—Interview.

[2] Interview.

[3] Experience had proved that pre-election pledges were practically worthless. Members of the legislature "go to Springfield with the label on their backs and ticketed to the caucus. No matter how honest or sincere they may be when making the pledges to secure votes, they are powerless to redeem their obligations if the caucus decides against them. Therefore, the working classes must elect their own representatives."—*Knights of Labor*, September 8, 1888.

[4] George Schilling, interview.

[5] On the economic field labor had been defeated by anarchy, employers' associations, and Pinkerton detectives. Still, thought many, "if workingmen go to work in dead earnest they can make the eight-hour day an accomplished fact by May 1st, 1887. It cannot be done, however, by strikes, lockouts or boycotts; it must be in the Legislature at Springfield. See to it that none but men pledged to a law making it a misdemeanor for employers to contract for more than eight hours as a day's labor be sent there." Concentrate on the legislature, advised the *Knights of Labor*; if workingmen do this "they will have settled the short-hour day question more effectively than it could possibly be done in any other way."—*Knights of Labor*, July 10, 1886.

started the ball rolling in August with a conference which launched the United Labor party. "At that time the party merited the name by which it was known, for in it were represented all of the various phases of labor economics, each one determined to sink for the time his own particular idiosyncrasy."[1] But when it came time to nominate candidates a conservative element, which wished to dicker with the old parties, withdrew and formed the Cook County Labor party.[2]

The fall election was a signal victory for the United Labor party. It polled about 25,000 votes and elected one state senator and seven members of the lower house.[3] In addition, it elected five out of the six judicial candidates which had received the labor indorsement, came within sixty-four votes of electing a congressman, and helped defeat the Democrats, turning the county over to the Republicans. "This is the biggest victory labor has ever won in Chicago."[4]

Outside the city there had been activity, too. Daniel McLaughlin, president of the miners' federation, member of the State Board of Labor Statistics, and a prominent Knight, was elected to the Assembly on the Republican ticket in Will County. J. P. French, of LaSalle, secretary of the Knights of Labor State Assembly, was another victor. George S. Bailey, of East St. Louis, won out on the Knights of Labor ticket in that city; and two other labor men were successful in the Illinois legislative race. "By uniting the

[1] *Knights of Labor*, August 24, 1886.

[2] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 419. "They nominated a ticket made up of Democrats, Republicans, and some independents."

[3] Assemblymen elected were: C. G. Dixon, J. J. Dwyer, Leo P. Dwyer, James O'Connor, W. P. Wright, George Rohrback, and Victor Karlowski; state senator: Richard M. Burke. "Chas. Seib made a close run for the senate and has probably been simply counted out."—*Knights of Labor*, November 6, 1886.

[4] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

Labor vote in the House with the Democratic vote, an exact tie can be produced," exulted the *Knights of Labor*. There were 46,000 votes for the Labor party in Illinois.[1]

But the spring election of 1887 was a great disappointment. The two old parties united on a single candidate for mayor in Chicago and opposed the Labor party with the cry that a vote for a regular candidate was a vote for law and order and the American flag, while a vote for the United Labor party was a vote for anarchy and the red flag. The Democrats weakened the Labor party by winning over William Gleason of the Executive Committee to the idea of fusion. In spite of high hopes, Robert Nelson, labor candidate for mayor, and his colleagues polled only some 25,000 votes out of 75,000, and elected only one alderman.[2]

Now came a split which was the beginning of the end. William Gleason, who had been conniving with the Democrats all along, organized a party of his own that was soon popularly styled the "Free Lunch" party. But it appropriated the name of the old Labor party through a state charter, and then in the fall indorsed the Democrats.[3] The Morgan wing of the United Labor party took the name Radical Labor party. It polled only about 7,000 votes at the next election. By this time the political labor forces in Cook County were divided into innumerable factions, each striving for the mastery, and each denouncing all the others. "The Morganites," chronicles the *Chicago Times*, "say that the Gleasonites are an annex of the Democratic party, while the

[1] *Knights of Labor*, September 18, 1886; November 6, 1886; Morgan files clipping.

[2] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 422. The *Knights of Labor* blamed the leadership of Thomas J. Morgan, the well-known socialist, and the participation of such revolutionaries as Albert Currlin and J. R. Buchanan for the result. "The workingmen of this country will never follow any set of men whose goal is a bloody revolution; the quicker such are placed in the rear the better" (April 16, 1887).

[3] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

Gleasonites say the Morganites are running a labor sideshow to catch Democratic votes and keep the Republicans in power.[1]

So far the State Labor Association had refrained from embarking on the sea of independent political action.[2] But now T. J. Morgan decided that an indorsement of Labor party principles from the state body might be helpful in the spring campaign. Morgan and his followers controlled the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly at the time,[3] and at a special meeting of that body just before the Peoria convention the Trades Assembly's delegates were instructed to have the state organization insert as the preamble to its constitution a long declaration written by Morgan. It argued that since the strike and the boycott had failed, and had even become criminal offenses in Illinois, "the one effective weapon in the hands of the workers" was their political power.[4]

[1] January 30, 1888.

[2] In 1887, when the convention met at Springfield, Joseph Farris, a radical single-taxer, submitted a resolution urging that laboring men cease to affiliate with the old parties and form themselves into a new party with the object of annihilating class distinctions and procuring an equal distribution of the products and profits of labor. It was reported by the Resolutions Committee with the recommendation that the last clause be stricken out. D. C. Kelly moved as an amendment "that labor organizations, as such, affiliate with no political party." It was moved to lay the amendment on the table, and Mr. Farris ended the matter by withdrawing his resolution, "which probably prevented another wrangle."—*Illinois State Register*, January 28, 1887. The delegates had doubtless found enough controversial issues in this convention, what with the blue label and the anarchist resolutions. At any rate, they did not go in for independent political action.

[3] Early in 1888 they succeeded in defeating Mark L. Crawford, a conservative, for re-election to the presidency of the Trades Assembly and elected Robert T. Swallow instead. The rallying cry was that victory for their candidate would mean a Labor party, while their defeat would mean a small Socialist party and a wing of Conservative Laborites attached to the Democrats.—*Chicago Times*, January 9, 1888; *ibid.*, January 16, 1888.

[4] "C. T. & L. A. Minutes," December 29, 1887.

At Peoria Morgan's essay on the necessity for political action was duly indorsed, along with a resolution on the same subject by August Stirmel of Cigarmakers' Local 14, and Charles Dold, a cigarmaker from Aurora, which resolved after seven hundred words of "Whereases": "That there be a committee of five elected to draft and submit a plan looking to the most feasible means to be adopted to secure independent political action of the laboring masses of this state." This committee[1] considered the matter and reported that a permanent committee ought to be formed with power to call a state political convention. "There was no definite action taken on this, nor was there any permanent committee appointed," says the *Peoria Journal.*

This, so far as the evidence shows, was as far as the State Federation got with any practical program looking toward that independent political action which it indorsed so verbosely. The Labor party politicians had wanted these official declarations from a state labor body for use in the spring campaign, but in the actual work of organization the Federation did little; it was too weak by this time.

The political action enthusiasts of the State Federation probably fell in with the Union Labor party movement, inaugurated in February, 1887, at a conference in Cincinnati. This, says E. B. Mittleman, "was really nothing more nor less than the ghost of the old Greenback party come to earth."[2] Standing on a platform considered broad enough for all advanced Democrats, Greenbackers, labor men, grangers, farmers' alliance men, and even the Henry Georgians and the Socialists to support, it undertook to extend its organization by establishing state parties. The Union Labor party of Illinois, rather than the State Federa-

[1] Robert T. Swallow, Chicago; Louis Engel, Chicago; Charles Dold, Aurora; J. W. Smith, Springfield; and George Beckler, Peoria.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 422.

tion, attempted to co-ordinate the activities of the numerous scattered city organizations which had grown up in Rock Island, Decatur, Mattoon, LaSalle, Streator, Chicago, and other localities during the Labor party agitations of 1886–87.[1] Benjamin W. Goodhue gave up his position as state lecturer for the Knights of Labor and traveled from county to county organizing Union Labor party clubs and bringing in all kinds of independent reform organizations. In April, 1888, when the Union Labor party of Illinois prepared to hold a state nominating convention at Decatur, the *Chicago Times* called it "an unknown quantity in Illinois politics," and averred that it "may develop sufficient strength to hold the balance of power" and that "it is highly probable that it will nominate the next governor of Illinois."[2]

The latter prediction was based on a plan formed by some Democratic trade unionists to nominate Senator Andrew J. Bell, of Peoria, on the Union Labor party ticket and then, with what prestige that might give him, to have him nominated by the Democrats as well. Senator Bell had been a strong labor man in the legislature, but he was a hard-shell Democrat, and his attitude in seeking the Labor party nomination was that of many other Democrats who sought to use, and did use, the labor people.[3] The plan fell through in the Union Labor party convention, however; and after a debate not calculated to promote party harmony—each faction describing the others as "liars"—W. W. Jones, of Camargo, became the candidate for governor and a motion to make his nomination unanimous was declared carried amid shouts of "No! No!" C. G. Dixon, of Chicago, was nominated for lieutenant-governor, Bert Stewart, of Decatur,

[1] *Knights of Labor*, April 23, 1887.

[2] April 26, 1888.

[3] Letter to the writer from former State Senator Richard M. Burke, December 7, 1926.

for secretary of state, and G. H. Collins, of Evanston, for auditor. The convention concluded its labors, after various groups had withdrawn from the hall in disgust, by indorsing A. J. Streetor, ex-president of the National Farmers' Alliance, for the Union Labor party presidential nomination.[1]

In spite of the strife within the party, its leaders entered the campaign with lofty predictions. They resolved to hammer on four issues: (1) an eight-hour working day in all industries not influenced by competition with other states; (2) the prohibition of the employment of children under the age of fifteen in any stores, workshops, or factories; (3) one day of rest in seven; and (4) "the complete obliteration of

[1] This Decatur convention of the Union Labor party, says Mr. Burke (letter cited in Footnote [3], p. 77), was in his judgment "the greatest asinine assemblage that was ever gathered in Illinois." "The majority were the remnants of the old Greenback organization, who closed their eyes to the fact that Greenbackism was dead and buried." There was "never in the history of our country such a motley array of cranks, no two sharing the same opinion." Mr. Burke, he says himself, was present largely out of curiosity, representing no organization, having no credentials, and that the same was true of most of the so-called delegates; he regarded the affair as a huge joke from the start. Senator Bell sought the labor nomination to help him get the Democratic nomination; another candidate wanted to be named by the convention in order to advertise himself in the insurance business.

The platform adopted by the convention included the strict enforcement of all laws; reduction of property taxes, assessment of holders of mortgages; election of railroad and warehouse commissioners by the people; control of the means of transportation and communication by the people as in the case of the postal system; a currency plank which demanded the establishment of a monetary system in the interest of the producer instead of the speculator, by which legal tender should be issued directly to the people without the intervention of banks or loaned to citizens upon ample security at a low rate of interest, free coinage of gold and silver, and the prompt payment of governmental debts; an industrial plank favoring arbitration, reduction in hours of labor commensurate with increase in machinery, protection of employees against injury, equal pay for equal work, and prohibition of child labor; a graduated income tax; a constitutional amendment making United States senators directly elected by the people; prohibition of the hiring of armed men by private corporations; equal suffrage irrespective of sex; and a declaration against the liquor traffic.—*Labor Enquirer*, April 28, 1888; *Chicago Times*, April 27, 1888.

that public infamy known as the Pinkerton Detective Agency."[1]

At the national convention in Cincinnati on May 17 the Illinois Union Labor party reported a full state ticket in the field and claimed that the arrest and conviction of boodlers in Chicago was due to its efforts.[2] In Chicago, the *Labor Enquirer*, which at first opposed the Union Labor party, and the *Knights of Labor* turned their columns to its support; eventually the Radical Labor party itself went over to it.[3] We shall follow the remainder of the career of the Union Labor party of Illinois in George Detwiler's *Knights of Labor*.

On August 4 there was "not the slightest doubt but that the Union Labor party can if it wishes to do so elect a sufficient number of men to hold the balance of power in the next State Legislature." On September 1 railroad men all over the state were thought to be coming to the front for independent political action, and this "almost assures the Labor party the balance of power in the next Legislature." "The present outlook," on the 8th was, "that every candidate named for the State Legislature (in Cook County) will be elected, with a good showing for some of the county officers, and a fair chance for Congressmen." And, evidently in answer to attacks, "The Union Labor party of Cook County may be a tail to a Democratic kite or it may be a tail to a Republican kite. But whichever kite gets the Cook County Labor party as a tail is not going to bite the dust for lack of ballast."[4] But as election day approached splits in the labor ranks became all too apparent, and a note of warning appeared: "Remember, there is but one labor ticket in the field that is represented by the Cook County Central Club of

[1] *Knights of Labor*, August 4, 1888.

[2] *Chicago Times*, May 17, 1888.

[3] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 422–23.

[4] *Knights of Labor*, September 8, 1888.

the Union Labor party. Don't be deceived by the Free Lunchers of Shacknasty Gleason or the go-as-you-please party of Tommy Morgan."[1]

Then the ballots were counted, and the Union Labor vote was negligible. Laboring men had voted the Democratic ticket.[2] But Editor Detwiler looked back upon the campaign and consoled himself with the thought that it was "most remarkable . . . . for the apparent interest that was displayed by both parties for the welfare of the working-classes. . . . . In the state of Illinois the canvass for Governor was practically made on the issue of the Pinkertons."[3] The Labor party movement had accomplished little in the way of vote-getting, but it had helped to make the grievances of labor one of the leading public questions of the times.

It was plain enough, however, that in the heat of a national and state campaign all hope for an independent political party of labor had evaporated. "The official vote of Illinois is in," bitterly remarks the *Knights of Labor* two months after the election. George W. Collins, the Union Labor candidate for state auditor, "did not receive a single vote. Camargo Jones lacked 361,497 votes of being elected

[1] *Ibid.*, October 20, 1888.

[2] Fifer, the Republican candidate, who had confidently expected to carry Cook County, lost it by 4,690 votes and admitted that the cause was labor ballots. "Palmer succeeded in winning the votes of the anarchists and the anarchistic classes," he said in an interview. "Again, while the laboring men of Illinois were by no means unfriendly to me. . . . many of the leaders of the labor organizations in Chicago warmly indorsed Palmer, and thus many in those organizations were led to him."—*Chicago Times*, November 9, 1888. Fifer, the Republican nominee, was elected, however.

[3] *Knights of Labor*, November 10, 1888. "Why was it," General Palmer had asked in his speeches, "that 'the state has become an object of such contempt that standing armies are raised in its midst. . . . that private men may organize soldiers in the state, hirelings to go with their Winchesters and overawe the people.' "—*Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 176.

governor. John M. Foley beat the head of the ticket 1,133 votes. Lt. Gov. Pecksniff got lost in the shuffle."[1]

This labor editor, like many other erstwhile Labor party enthusiasts, was convinced that

> As a national organization a labor party or any other distinctively class party is played out. If any demonstration of that fact is needed we refer to the returns of the late campaign. The Union Labor party, which was supposed to represent the Knights of Labor, the Trade Unions, the Farmers' Alliance, the Wheel, the Grangers, Anarchism, Socialism, Greenbackism, Free Land, Free Labor, Free Transportation, Free Banks and Free Lunch polled about one hundred and fifty thousand votes, and that too after a campaign of brag and bluster such as was never indulged in by a prize fighter."[2]

And now, disappointed once more in political panaceas, came the return to trade-union tactics. "The working classes can exert their power to a much better advantage by using their votes as a club to smash the head of that one of the old parties that refuses to deal justly with them. In the meantime, agitate, organize, educate for the eight-hour day on the first of May, 1890."[3]

What were the reasons for the break-up of the independent political movement of the eighties?

From the first the Labor party movement had to contend against strong ties to the old-line organizations. Many honest workingmen were loyal Democrats or Republicans, and dissention arose at once between those who saw more hope of success for labor in bargaining with the established parties and those who wanted to cut adrift entirely.

Then there were the machinations of old-party politicians, who know innumerable ways to sow disaster in a budding Labor party. Many of the would-be leaders, who set up rival factions here and there, were motivated by

[1] January 19, 1888.

[2] *Knights of Labor*, December 29, 1888.

[3] *Ibid.*

Republican or Democratic money rather than the interests of the workers.

Above all, there were the multifarious divisions within the labor movement itself. Socialists, single-taxers, anti-monopolists, anarchists, "pure and simple" trade unionists, Republican and Democratic fusionists—all had their favorite solutions of labor's political problems, and, once the initial success was achieved in the fall elections of 1886, each separate faction interpreted it as a clear mandate from the people to take charge of all future policies.

A fourth factor, which he considers the fundamental one behind this and subsequent Labor party failures, George Shilling states thus: "There is an instinctive feeling among trade unionists that when they join a union they do not surrender their individual politics or religion. They will go so far in a political movement, but if pressed too far they jump the track."[1]

As for the State Labor party itself, it came into the field after the crest of the political wave had passed, was even more impregnated with *isms* than the city Labor parties, and had to contend immediately with the well-drilled cohorts of the major parties in a presidential year. The Union Labor party of Illinois was a complete fiasco, at least in so far as victory at the polls is the test of success.

It is true, however, that the political movement of the eighties did arouse an enormous amount of interest in the problems of labor, brought the labor vote forcibly to the attention of politicians, and perhaps laid the basis for reforms, the fruit of which was reaped years later. "One thing is sure," said the *Rights of Labor*[2] in 1892, "the workingmen of Chicago never had so much attention paid to their

[1] Interview.

[2] Successor to the *Knights of Labor*. Quotation from issue of October 22, 1892.

political demands as they did immediately after they had cast their votes in the fall of 1886, and when they cast 27,000 votes for mayor in 1887."

For the Illinois State Federation of Labor these political storms constituted one more disrupting force in the labor world of the kaleidoscopic eighties. The role played by the state organization was a minor one. It was used as a tool in the maneuvers of some labor politicians; it directed no movement of its own.

CHAPTER V

ACTORS OF THE NINETIES

We have seen that the disrupting forces of the eighties had reduced the Illinois State Federation almost to a nonentity as the decade drew to a close. A revival and reorganization came in November, 1890, at Quincy.[1] V. B. Williams, of Typographical 16, had been elected president by the handful at Jacksonville the preceding January, and the invigoration of the state body was largely due to his efforts.[2] The printers took hold of the Federation in 1890, as the cigarmakers had done in 1888, and sent out letters urging a good attendance.[3]

The result was that thirty-three delegates assembled at Quincy, representing three central bodies and twenty-one local unions in eleven different trades. This representation was nearly as large as in the best-attended conventions of the eighties, except that of 1884. Cigarmakers, printers, carpenters, and molders were most prominent in the convention; harnessmakers, bakers, brewers, stove-mounters, press-feeders, and machine-coopers were represented.

This was a turning-point in the Federation's history. "It was really a new federation after the Quincy convention."[4] Its career ceased to be one of decline and became one of growth. John C. Harding, of Typographical 16, Chicago, was elected president and pledged himself to build up the state

[1] Because two conventions were held in 1890 (the "Seventh Annual Session" at Jacksonville in January and the "Eighth Annual Session" at Quincy in November) all subsequent conventions of the Federation have been numbered as though the organization dated from 1883 instead of 1884.

[2] John C. Harding, interview.

[3] Charles Dold, interview.

[4] John C. Harding, interview.

organization. Each delegate at Quincy was made an accredited representative to visit all the locals in his vicinity to urge them to join. With proper effort, said Mr. Harding, the next convention might consist of from 100 to 150 delegates. This hope was not quite realized, but the Federation did grow—as is shown by the table on page 16. Although, as we shall discover, the abnormally large attendance in two or three conventions after 1892 sometimes indicated "packed" assemblies in the interest of rival politicians rather than enthusiasm for the work of the Federation, the zeal for increased bona-fide affiliations continued to the end of the period.

This growth of the Federation coincided with important developments in the field of trade unionism at large. The nineties saw a growing solidarity of international unions within the American Federation of Labor, the displacement of middle-class panaceas such as producers' co-operation, currency, and land reform by more distinctly trade-union action, and above all the emergence of the trade agreement. New agencies also made their appearance in the labor struggle. The labor movement felt the power of great trusts; employers' associations developed;[1] the court injunction established a novel method of legal attack. By the latter part of the decade, "the formative stage of trade unionism was complete."[2] These developments in the labor field as a whole had their effect upon the contemporaneous growth of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, as did the panic of 1893 and the hard times, the Populist movements of the

[1] The Illinois Manufacturers' Association, subsequently the chief opponent of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in most legislative battles, was organized early in 1894. Its first purpose was to defeat the Women's Eight-Hour Law in the courts, according to the *Eight-Hour Herald* (February 20, 25, 1894).

[2] Selig Perlman, in Commons and associates, *The History of Labour in the United States*, II, 519.

nineties, the free silver campaign, and the chaotic conditions in the Chicago central labor body.

The growth of the nineties was a turbulent growth, not a calm and steady development. The era from 1892 to 1895, particularly, was one of turmoil and struggle in the State Federation. In many ways these were its "formative years," during which the Federation passed through a severe crisis and emerged from the ordeal ready to develop henceforth in the direction of the respectable and responsible organization it has since become. In this and the two following chapters we shall see, first, a revival of interest and a healthy growth, lasting through 1892. The Federation accomplished a useful piece of work in helping to elect John P. Altgeld, one of the best governors Illinois ever had. Then the Illinois State Federation of Labor sailed into stormy waters. Some of the "labor-skates" and hangers-on, who are always lurking on the fringe of the trade-union movement to prey upon it, worked themselves into power in Chicago, captured the State Federation, and used it as a tool until 1894. Next, while the "Chicago push" battled with the Socialist adherents of their fellow-townsman, Tommy Morgan, the downstaters found themselves holding the balance of power, proceeded to appropriate the offices, and for the next few years devoted themselves to house-cleaning. The period closed with some really constructive work for the advancement of the Federation.

This story of Illinois labor politics in the nineties is so hectic and complicated that it would defy exposition, were it not for the fact that the plot, like good drama, centers about a few leading personalities who are, or who typify, the moving human forces behind it. Once these characters are placed, what appears to be a maze of contradictions in the policy of the Illinois State Federation of Labor becomes meaningful, and the whole record shows itself to be the resultant of efforts

emanating from several rather well-defined interest groups working at cross-purposes, now one dominant, now another, and again two joining together against a third.

The center of the stage must often be accorded to William C. Pomeroy and his cohorts, for the internal history of the Federation through several crucial years is largely a chronicle of Pomeroy's rise and fall.

POMEROY AND THE "CHICAGO GANG"

Early in the nineties the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly fell into the hands of a group of self-seeking men who for a time made the name "labor leader" synonymous with "crook" and "grafter." In those days a union needed only seven members to get representation in the central body, and the "labor skates" could easily afford the 7 cents per capita per month in return for profitable opportunities opened by controlling votes in the Trade and Labor Assembly.[1] There was the labor directory graft, which yielded profits from the advertising; this was one of the best-paying schemes for making money in the name of organized labor. Labor Day picnics and souvenir programs could be made to pay handsome returns. The lobby graft and the committee graft were means of tapping the treasury of the central body itself.[2] Then, of course, there were innumerable ways for sharing the funds of political parties in return for maneuvers

[1] Charles Dold, interview.

[2] George Schilling says: "I used to be treasurer of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, and every Sunday Pomeroy or one of his bunch would come up and ask 'How much is in the treasury?' At first I'd tell them. But every time some motion would be passed that would spend it all—for some committee or something of the sort. Finally, when they asked me that I said, 'Flat broke.' Then no such motions were brought in."

Rights of Labor, January 21, 1893: "The gang were entirely successful at the Trades Assembly last Sunday. They captured everything in sight. Over four hundred delegates were present, probably two hundred and fifty representing nothing but a 'd—d barren ideality.' "

in the Trades Assembly or for leading a fake labor political movement calculated to cut into the votes of an opposition party. "Aldermanic nominations," at the hands of various personally-conducted labor parties, were "sold like radishes —so much a bunch with a discount for cash customers."[1]

By 1892 the corrupt gangs were so strongly intrenched and their activities had become so open and unashamed that the Trades Assembly was "on the eve of disruption."[2] The *Rights of Labor* said,

Bogus labor organizations have been used to foist bogus labor men to the front and to indorse bogus labor directories and other bogus schemes to rob, not only the general public, but the workingmen themselves. The name of organized labor has been prostituted and dragged in the mud by these scoundrels.[3] It is perfectly safe to say that during the past three or four years not less than $100,000 has been collected by these alleged committees from the general public and from the workingmen themselves, not one dollar of which has ever gone into the treasury of any labor organization or been used for any legitimate purpose in connection with labor movements.[4]

The self-respecting unions had already begun to revolt but it was several years before they were able to oust the crooks and establish a new central body under the name Chicago Federation of Labor.

[1] *Rights of Labor* (formerly the *Knights of Labor*), March 11, 1893.

[2] *Rights of Labor*, September 24, 1892. "Six years ago the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly came very near being disrupted by a crowd of bum politicians who attempted to use it to advance their personal interests. These fellows were finally relegated to the rear, the organization recuperated, and became a power for good. Two years ago another gang, a hundred times worse than the politicians, began a systematic effort to capture that body to use for the most contemptible the most dastardly and the most dishonest purposes, not for political prestige but for pecuniary profit. That they have not as yet entirely succeeded is owing mainly to the courage of a few brave men who dare stand up and defy them. . . . . The Trade and Labor Assembly is on the eve of disruption; only one thing can save it: Don't make two bites of a cherry—bounce the gang of corrupt boodlers."—*Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*, December 17, 1892.

At the center of this turmoil in the Chicago Labor movement was a scheming, joking genius by the name of William C. Pomeroy. Personally, Pomeroy was one of the most remarkable characters ever connected with organized labor in Illinois. He came into labor circles with the organization of the culinary trade in 1886, was sent to the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly by his waiters' local that same year, and became financial secretary at the second meeting he attended.[1] From this time his influence in the labor politics of the city began to rise, and when the political upheavals of the early nineties came round this "young leader of older men," as he likes to refer to himself, was able to dominate, for a while, the Trades Assembly and the State Federation of Labor.

Friend and foe alike describe him as "a talented fellow," "a genius," or "one of the brightest men I ever met."[2] "He might have made a wonderful record in Congress" or in the labor movement, is the unanimous opinion of those who knew him in his prime—if only he had been honest.[3] But he was unscrupulous. "He would sooner make five dollars in a crooked way than ten dollars honestly, because the one involved scheming and the other didn't so much. And he had brains enough to make it either way."[4] "He lived off the labor movement," says Joseph Farris, and "his career proves this rule: you've got to have ideals if you want to be anything permanent in this world."[5] But Billy Pomeroy was "not any worse than the rest of them," defends one of his former

[1] William C. Pomeroy, interview.

[2] Interviews, C. J. Riefler, Charles Dold, Mark L. Crawford.

[3] "If Pomeroy had been straight he would have been a power in the movement, no question about it," says Charles Dold. "He never did a stroke of work in his life. He had plenty of income though. He supported several followers who didn't work either."

[4] George Schilling, interview.

[5] Interview.

co-workers; he was a "good fellow" and a liberal spender; "if he had $1,000 today he'd be broke tomorrow."[1] He had a robust sense of humor and never tired of concocting practical jokes or scheming ways to tease his serious-minded opponents."[2]

In his "business"[3] deals Pomeroy was shrewd and cunning, but it was in handling meetings of men that his greatest talents appeared. As a speaker, he was matchless. Big of stature, with commanding presence, he "just cowed men."[4] He was a master of keen, witty sarcasm and florid oratory. Here is a sample of his eloquence on his favorite theme, "American Trade Unionism":

> Their mission is to better the conditions under which man suffers in this sphere with its little span of life. To drive care from the brow of toil, to keep bright the light in the eye of hope, to curtain with a smile the features of despair, to feed the hunger of the mind and stomach, to quench the thirst for knowledge and love, to whip want from this land of plenty, to destroy despotism and place liberty above greed. . . . . Trades Unionists are optimistic for the present; pessimistic for the future, whose shroud of doubt dwarfs hope. . . . . They know that the world of 1894 is *not* the world of 1794. They know that within a few decades the lightning has been chained, distance almost annihilated, and time called to halt. They know that, beneath the piercing glance of progress, all things have become material and fit subjects for man's criticism. They have seen the veils torn aside from the face of fact and halos measured with the power of thought. . . . . They know they live in an age when Labor, hitherto vincible, has seized the Medusa shield, and like a Titan encased

[1] Richard Powers, interview. Pomeroy was "an awfully bright fellow," says Mark Crawford, "but he needed somebody to hold him down. He used to get $10 and go straight to a saloon and spend it all."—Interview.

[2] Pomeroy told the writer with glee how he once succeeded in having the Constitution of the United States brought in by the Resolutions Committee of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly and tricked some radicals in that body into praising it without knowing what it was.—Interview.

[3] He had no regular occupation. The *Centennial History of Illinois* mentions him as "formerly a waiter, now a real estate man."—IV, 164–65. He also professed to follow the "advertising business."

[4] C. J. Riefler, interview.

in the panoply of knowledge, stands heroic before the crumbling throne of Mammon, and names the day of the dawn of the sunrise of liberty.[1]

As a convention tactitian Pomeroy was at his best, and his gifts along this line made him formidable in the Illinois State Federation of Labor. He was a "long-headed schemer," easy-mannered, hearty, jovial, commanding—in short, he had all the qualities of the political "boss." "His room is always crowded," writes a delegate who was attending an American Federation of Labor convention with Pomeroy; "he has a marvelous memory, and every night, in his own inimitable way, he rehearses the speeches of the delegates during the day in a voice, tone, and a gesticulation that would do the original credit."[2]

The "Chicago bunch" at State Federation conventions was always conspicuous, relates R. W. Schuch.[3] "They were noisy. In hotels they would never let you sleep. Pomeroy would come and hammer on your door if he found you'd gone to bed. He'd say, 'Where's So-and-So?' and if he'd gone to bed Pomeroy would wake him up." They went around the streets at night singing doggerel verses composed by their leader:

We raised a great commotion
  To everybody's notion,
We raised a great commotion
  In the town.
We got full of exhilaration
  And got locked up in the station,
But we raised a great commotion
  In the town.[4]

[1] *Eight-Hour Herald*, March 10, 1894.

[2] *Eight-Hour Herald*, January 16, 1896.

[3] Interview.

[4] This was at the Quincy convention of 1891.—Quoted from memory by John C. Harding, interview.

Pomeroy's gang also had yells which they shouted in the convention hall itself. "I always thought that was a way they had of making themselves seem

It was Pomeroy who conducted the British journalist W. T. Stead through the city's places of misery while that writer gathered local color for his famous book *If Christ Came to Chicago*.[1] Pomeroy even ventured into the literary realm himself and produced a little book, *The Lords of Misrule—A Tale of Gods and Men*, published by the same firm which had issued Stead's work. The story placed the characters of mythology on the stand and obtained their testimony concerning the hidden acts of men; in it the gods, "having the power to lurk invisible in the haunts of mortals, succeed in disclosing the corruption and hypocrisy of the 'leading lights' of modern civilization."[2] It was extravagantly written and illustrated with lurid pictures. "The book," says its author, "was crazy at the time, but the world has outstripped it and is twice as crazy as the book now."[3]

Pomeroy always campaigned for what he was pleased to call "American trade unionism," and his ability to gather followers under such a slogan probably accounts for much of his temporary success. Like many other demagogues, before and since, he was able to trademark himself with "Americanism" to his own profit. Pomeroy played upon the opposition to "fads" in the labor movement and made clever use of bogies like socialism and anarchism, which in those days corresponded to the Bolshevist bogy of our own day. He led the forces of "pure and simple" trade unionism, until he himself was ejected for the sake of purity.

When the American Federation of Labor finally expelled him from the labor movement in December, 1896, a Chicago newspaper summarized his career thus:

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big," comments R. W. Schuch. "They gave the impression of being a big bunch when they were not so big—like a dozen college fellows giving their yell, people would say, 'There must be fifty of them.' "—Interview.

[1] William C. Pomeroy, interview.

[2] *Eight-Hour Herald*, March 25, 1894.

[3] Interview.

As a general proposition. . . . Pomeroy has few defenders. The rejected labor man is one of the noted figures in the trades union movement. A matchless orator and a shrewd tactitian, as well as the best organizer in the West, his enemies and friends alike conceded his ability. He rarely lost a fight on the floor of a meeting hall. Ten years ago he was a waiter, and it is a byword that he has never waited since. But he has kept alive, has built up and in many cases organized the unions of restaurant and hotel employes all over the country. As a delegate to the old Trade and Labor Assembly he won recognition by his oratory and executive capacity, and he probably made more enemies by his victories in union affairs than by the alleged looseness of his morals. Until within the last two months he was never downed. There are those who prophesy that he will rise again.[1]

MORGAN AND THE SOCIALISTS

A second element in the internal political alignment of the Illinois Federation of Labor during this period was the socialist group, of which Thomas J. Morgan was the moving spirit.

Born to poverty in Birmingham, England, "as near hell as one can conveniently get on this earth," to use his own language,[2] Tommy Morgan attended the "ragged school" until nine years of age, when he went to work. His parents were humble nail-makers who rose at four in the morning and wrought till nine at night for the merest pittance,[3] and the nine-year-old boy took his place with them. From nail-making he graduated to a job printing press, then went into an iron foundry and became a molder, thence entered a thimble factory, and finally took up the trade of machinist and brass finisher.

All this time he had been picking up what "book-learning" he could by the wayside. At the Unitarian Sunday school writing and arithmetic were taught, and Tommy

[1] Clipping in Morgan Scrapbook (University of Chicago).

[2] *Rights of Labor*, April 4, 1891.

[3] *Evening Post*, February 24, 1894, clipping in Morgan Scrapbook.

Morgan went there. In the attic where the job printing press was "pulled" there was a dilapidated copy of *Aesop's Fables*; this and *Robinson Crusoe* and such other books as could be had he used to pore over in the evenings by the light of a tallow candle. Under the stimulus received at the Sunday school he went to the Athenaeum night school and took up the study of mechanical drawing. He began to desert his story books for Cassell's "Popular Educator Series," drifted from church literature to republican reading, and became utterly radical, "attending political mass meetings at every opportunity, and being so antagonistic to the aristocracy that he would choose a fashionable promenade for his walks, and, instead of giving way to a well-dressed person, as workingmen were accustomed to do, he would stand firm and let the collision come."[1]

In 1868 he married. His wife continued working, but their joint earnings were barely enough for existence, and looking into the future Morgan could see no better times ahead. "The two objects which blurred all the rest were the poorhouse and the jail. An accident or a week out of employment would inevitably end in either one or the other."[2] So he decided to emigrate and in May, 1869, landed in Chicago with $12 in his pocket. He walked eight miles a day to and from work in order to save carfare, and after seven months there was enough money to pay Mrs. Morgan's passage from England. Then came the panic of 1873, and for fifteen long weeks Morgan was out of work. The young couple had no credit, the flour ran low, and for several cold days and nights there was no fire in the house. Morgan, the Socialist, said in later years,

> That proved to me conclusively that in leaving the old country I had not escaped all the cares of working life. I began to send out my mind in

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*

inquiries. There was no hereditary aristocracy, no kings or queens, no standing army to absorb the vitality of the people. Here in this land flowing with milk and honey thousands were starving.[1]

He devoted himself to *Social Statistics* by Herbert Spencer, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Hale's *Social Science*, Thornton *On Labor*, and similar reading.

Then he became president of his local machinist's union and introduced a school of mechanical drawing; his union also sent him as a delegate to the old Labor League. In 1873 he attended his first Socialist meeting, and in 1875 espoused the cause of socialism. He was active in the Workingmen's party. When the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly came into being in the late seventies Morgan was one of the prime movers. In 1879 he obtained copies of the English factory acts, drafted them into the form of ordinances, and got them adopted by the Council of the city of Chicago, where they remained part of the municipal code for many years. The Trade and Labor Assembly split in 1884, and Morgan and the more radical members formed the Central Labor Union, which existed until the reorganization of Chicago central bodies in 1896. During the independent political movements of the eighties T. J. Morgan was always a power to be reckoned with; and it was his attempt to precipitate independent political action on the part of the American Federation of Labor in the nineties, and the ensuing struggle over "Plank 10," which brings him into the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

Such was the career of Thomas J. ("Tommy") Morgan. At the time he enters our story he was employed as a machinist in the carshops of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, where he had been working since 1875, carrying on his multifarious political activities outside of working hours. "He never wasted an hour in his life." In 1894 he set up a

[1] *Ibid.*

law office of his own, having qualified for the bar in his spare time. He is described as "short of stature and substantially built," with a countenance "striking but not handsome." "The firmly molded chin and square lower jaw stamp him as a man of tenacity of purpose."[1] His British vernacular furnished a target for the jokes of his sworn enemy, Pomeroy, who used to imitate him with great gusto.

"A forceful, aggressive, honest fellow," Charles J. Riefler says of Morgan. "He had no selfish interests to serve; he believed absolutely in the socialistic government."[2] "Absolutely honest," is the verdict of Charles Dold. "He could have controlled the Chicago labor movement much more than he did had he not worked under the handicap of being an avowed Socialist."[3] George Schilling describes him as honest but "very bitter against opposition." "He used to like to have a little handful of followers who would follow him implicitly and almost worship him. He would rather have this than be in with an advancing victorious movement of which he was not the leader."[4]

Schilling continues,

> He was a wonderful resolution writer. We used to call him "Resolution Morgan" sometimes. He worked out his resolutions at the Illinois Central shops—wrote them out on sheets of brass while on the job and then later put them on paper to bring in to the Trade and Labor Assembly on Sunday afternoon. He always had a basketful—on everything. The reason he wrote so many resolutions was that when written out and adopted they became the action of a group and the papers would print them, when they would not report individual speeches on the same subjects.[5]

[1] Article by Eva McDonald-Valesh, *Minneapolis Tribune*, September 25, 1891, in Morgan Scrapbook.

[2] Interview.

[3] Interview.

[4] Interview.

[5] Interview. Morgan was able to stay in the employ of the Illinois Central in spite of being a well-known radical, partly on account of the fact that both he

This, then, is Tommy Morgan of the nineties. We shall find him always fighting Pomeroy, and always seeking to further the cause of socialism. And Morgan, as well as Pomeroy, was no mean convention strategist.

SINGLE-TAXERS AND DOWNSTATERS

There was a third group among Chicago trade unionists during the turbulent nineties which was opposed to the methods of Pomeroy and his crowd and yet was not willing to travel under the Morgan banner as Socialist. This was potentially the strongest group, but it was diffused and unorganized. It had to have some nucleus around which to gather before it could make headway against the group in control, which knew exactly what it wanted. Much the same situation existed for a time in the State Federation, but here there was an almost immediate rallying point; the nucleus was furnished by the single-taxers.

We have already seen George Schilling play a prominent part in one or two of the state conventions of the eighties, and in the nineties his influence was much more considerable. He was the third of the trio of floor-leaders—Pomeroy, Morgan, Schilling—whose efforts shaped the destinies of the State Federation during these years.

Schilling was what Pomeroy called a "faddist." At various times he has been philosophical anarchist, "individual socialist," and syndicalist; always he has been a free-trader, a single-taxer, and a Democrat. He was the labor adviser of John P. Altgeld, the liberal Democratic governor elected in 1892, and headed the Bureau of Labor Statistics under Altgeld's administration. Usually he was lined up against Pomeroy, whose practical mind hated all kinds of fads.

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and his foreman were high Masons and the foreman protected him, partly on account of his skill. Morgan invented some things which were valuable to the company, such as a contrivance for opening the doors quickly on cars fitted up to transport passengers during the World's Fair.—Schilling, interview.

His tactics were not at all like those of Pomeroy and Morgan. Quiet, astute, persistent, he worked in behind the scenes. The *Peoria Herald* characterized him as "smooth and suave" and "a power among the members of the federation, especially outside of Chicago. He is not quite loud enough to suit some of the latter crowd."[1]

Also a single-taxer was Charles J. Riefler, president of the Illinois State Federation from 1894 to 1897. He was a printer by occupation and thirty-two years of age at the time of his election. Having joined the Springfield Typographical Union No. 177 in 1882, he served three terms as president of his local and also became president of the Springfield Federation of Labor. In the winter of 1885, when the fight for convict-labor legislation was on in the legislature, Riefler gave effective service and "had it not been for his co-operation the constitutional amendment prohibiting contract convict labor would not have been passed during that session."[2] He was foreman of the *Springfield Daily Register* for several years and edited the single-tax column of that paper.[3] In 1895 he became a member of the newly created State Board of Arbitration, by appointment of Governor Altgeld, and served until 1897.[4]

Riefler was small of stature and slightly built; what he lacked in size he made up in nerve, activity, and enthusiasm. He must have looked like a fighting bantam-cock against Pomeroy.

Joseph W. Farris, an iron-molder of Springfield who had likewise fallen under the spell of Henry George, was another

[1] *Peoria Herald*, October 12, 1895.

[2] *Eight-Hour Herald*, November 25, 1894.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] At present he is vice-president of the Springfield Life Insurance Company and has taken no part in the labor movement for more than twenty years, though he still holds an active card in his union.—Interview.

of the downstaters who helped wrest control of the Federation from the "Chicago bunch" in the nineties, as was Walter S. Bush, a printer who edited and published the *Peoria Labor Gazette.*

CHAPTER VI

THE PLOT THICKENS

SCHILLING, CONVICT LABOR, AND ALTGELD

When the constitutional amendment of 1886 was adopted the contracting out of prison labor in Illinois was made illegal, but that does not mean that the practice stopped. Many of the contracts had a long time yet to run; others had been extended to the maximum of eight years allowed by law after it became apparent that the amendment would carry.[1]

As the campaign of 1892 approached, George Schilling organized the Anti-Contract Convict Labor League and incorporated it under the laws of Illinois. It was launched among the trades most affected by convict labor, such as the coopers, stonecutters, and shoemakers, and then, "by the law of sympathy," gathered in other labor organizations. The master coopers and other employers who had to meet the competition of convict-made products also co-operated with the League; without their help it would not have met with success.[2]

The League centered its attack upon contracts for convict labor which were still in operation despite the constitutional amendment of 1886. It claimed that new long-time contracts had been entered into unlawfully after state officials knew the result of the referendum which ratified the constitutional amendment, but before Governor Oglesby had issued a proclamation to put the amendment in force.

[1] George Schilling, interview. When the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly sent a committee to Joliet to find the dates at which these contracts would expire, the report was 1890, 1892, 1894, 1894, 1894, 1894.

[2] *Ibid.*

The League hired Judge Barnum to file invalidation suits against these contracts.[1]

But the real purpose of the Anti-Contract Convict Labor League was not apparent at first. Judge John P. Altgeld, whom organized labor men in Chicago had learned to know and trust during the political movements of the eighties, was soon to appear as a candidate for governor. The League "was an indirect movement for Altgeld all along." "We kept that in the background and tunnelled under the whole city first," says Schilling; "the whole thing was ready to cave in for Altgeld when he was brought forward." Lawyers for the League were instructed not to hurry the court actions instituted against the contracts; they were chiefly for publicity. If Altgeld were elected they would be dropped, for Altgeld had promised to remedy the situation. If Fifer, the Republican candidate, were successful the suits would be pushed with all the energy the League could muster.[2]

The 1892 convention of the State Federation of Labor assembled at Ottawa in October. The Alton convention of the previous year had voted to shift the date of its annual meeting from November (after election) to October (before election). "The responsibility," charged Victor B. Williams, of Typographical 16, was "on the Chicago Coopers' Union."[3] George Schilling was a far-sighted politician.

The sentiment of the delegates at this strategically timed convention was overwhelmingly Democratic. "Laboring for Altgeld—A Democratic Political Gathering in Disguise," bitterly reported the *Ottawa Republican-Times*.[4] "The State Federation of Labor has been used as a cat's-paw for shrewd

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 12, 1891; *Ottawa Republican-Times*, October 20, 1892.

[4] October 20, 1892.

political work by such men as George Schilling, C. J. Stivers, and other designing Democrats," the paper charged. "It regaled itself Thursday by opening up great boxes of Altgeld literature, addressed to George Schilling. . . . who handed the books out with a liberal hand. He denied that there was anything political in it, 'written a long time ago and good reading matter.' " The *Ottawa Free Trader*, on the other hand, exulted in the fact that the state labor convention was "Jumping On Fifer. . . For His Work With Convict Labor," and that democracy had been "practically endorsed."[1]

Indeed, the State Federation of Labor was manufacturing campaign material for the Democrats. C. J. Stivers, allowed the privilege of the floor as a representative of the Anti-Contract Convict Labor League, addressed the convention for two hours, principally on the non-enforcement of the convict-labor laws under the Republican administration. Then came the report of the Convict Labor Committee. This "was a typewritten document, and had probably been prepared in Judge Altgeld's law office in Chicago," complained the *Republican-Times*. It recited that the Republican administration had managed to evade the people's will as expressed in the constitutional amendment of 1886 by entering into eight-year contracts, and that even the labor of prisoners not employed under these contracts had been let out under the so-called "piece-price plan," of which ex-Governor Oglesby said: "If there is any substantial distinction between the contract and the piece-price plan, so far as the product of either is to be considered as coming in conflict with outside skilled labor, and as injurious and detrimental thereto, I fail to recognize it." It further charged that "evidences of conspiracy and fraud are so palpable that we believe. . . . the state administration, as it relates to

[1] *Ottawa Free Trader*, October 15, 1892.

the matter under discussion, has either shown great incompetency or infamous venality." The committee recommended that the State Federation co-operate with the Anti-Contract Convict Labor League, and that its Legislative Committee draft a bill for diversification of prison industries to be submitted to the next legislature.[1]

Pomeroy "gave the report several serious blows," but at the same time favored adoption on the ground that it was beneficial to the working classes. V. B. Williams said the question was of paramount importance to working people in general but denounced the committee for bringing it up just before election; he thought the introduction of politics into the Federation was a detriment to the cause of labor. W. H. Austin, of East St. Louis, a carpenter, thought both parties were to blame and urged that the Federation should support only candidates on either ticket who were in sympathy with the labor movement. But the report was adopted, with very few dissenting votes. Furthermore, the committee on resolutions introduced a convict labor memorial to the people of Illinois, which was unanimously adopted. In it was embodied the entire report of the Committee on Convict Labor, which so strongly arraigned Governor Fifer, the penitentiary commissioners and the Republican party.[2]

This was not all the ammunition turned out for the Democrats. "Two additional bombs were exploded . . . . while yet the Fifer smoke had scarce grown thin." One was in the shape of a resolution demanding of the Republican State Central Committee that it drop one of its members because he was running a non-union shop and was an enemy of organized labor. Another censured the attorney-general and the secretary of state for allowing two non-union cigar

[1] *Ottawa Republican-Times*, October 20, 1892, where this document is printed in full.

[2] *Ibid*; *Ottawa Free-Trader*, October 15, 1892.

manufacturers of Chicago to register a label in close imitation of the cigar-makers' union label. Just at the close of the session, on motion of William C. Pomeroy and without debate, the convention adopted a resolution demanding that the unnatural barriers placed about trade and commerce by the national government be removed. "Had it . . . . endorsed Grover Cleveland and the Democratic platform it could not have come out more clearly against the Republican party. . . . ."[1]

Judge Altgeld was elected, and the votes of laboring people had much to do with his success. He proved himself to be one of the most progressive, humanitarian, and courageous men ever elected to the governorship in Illinois. The State Federation of Labor, by lending support to his campaign, had exerted its political influence wisely.[2]

Schilling, who was Altgeld's adviser on labor matters, named the State Labor Board and put on all single-taxers.[3]

[1] *Ottawa Free-Trader*, October 15, 1892.

[2] The *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 183 f., says of Altgeld that he was "at once a consummate politician, and a real friend of the people." He was elected "not only as a Democrat but as spokesman for an acute economic and social unrest which demanded satisfaction."

"For the protection of the workers, he appointed a woman factory inspector, Florence Kelley, who carried out rigidly the hitherto neglected provisions of the factory inspection law in regard to sanitary and safety measures; in the interests of a more humanitarian method of dealing with society's dependents he inaugurated the indeterminate sentence and parole system for criminals, sponsored the creation of the great insane hospital at Bartonville and, at Peoria, the Asylum for the Incurable Insane, and in addition improved the facilities and administration of the various state institutions. Seeing in public education the great hope of social democracy and justice, he spared no effort to improve the school system of the state; the normal schools at De Kalb and at Charleston stand in large measure as his monument, while the University of Illinois received from him heartier support than it had had from any of his predecessors. . . . ."—*Ibid.*

He pardoned the anarchists, Fielden, Neebe, and Schwab, and under his administration the convict-labor system was readjusted so as to reduce somewhat the competition with free labor.

[3] Joseph A. Farris, interview. Farris was one of those appointed. "Altgeld," he says, "had some really fundamental reformers in his administration."

He also claims credit for the appointment of Florence Kelley as state factory inspector.[1] Schilling himself became secretary of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the next biennial report of that bureau was a famous report on taxation which exposed glaring inequities in property assessment and advocated reforms including a tax on land values. When the arbitration law was passed in 1895, Charles J. Riefler, then president of the State Federation of Labor, was appointed to the Board of Arbitration. From 1894 to 1897, while the single-tax Democrats were in the saddle, the State Federation was closely linked with the Altgeld administration.

ENTER WILLIAM C. POMEROY

From 1890 to 1892, under the presidencies of V. B. Williams and John C. Harding, the Illinois State Federation of Labor was well on the way to becoming a respectable power in the labor movement. Then it drew the attention of aspiring schemers in Chicago.

William C. Pomeroy was present at a State Federation convention for the first time in 1891, and this young man, "one of the brightest labor leaders in the West," made such a favorable impression that he became chairman of the Committee on Organization and was sent as a delegate to the American Federation of Labor Convention.

Next year Pomeroy laid plans to control. Three months before the Ottawa convention he called a preliminary meeting in Bricklayers' Hall, Chicago, where the Trade and Labor Assembly held its sessions. There a second caucus was arranged, to be assembled at the call of Walter Groves of the Seamen's Union. It met in Werner's pavilion; possibly forty were present, members of Pomeroy's faction. Michael H. Madden was selected to be the next president of the State

[1] Schilling, interview.

Federation of Labor, and the men in the caucus set about lining up delegates to attend the convention.[1]

The program went through; Madden[2] was elected, and Pomeroy, at the head of the "Chicago Push," had become a power in the state organization.

Among the "labor skates" who fastened themselves upon the Chicago trade-union movement in the nineties, one of the favorite ways of raising money was by the publication of souvenirs, gazettes, or directories filled with advertising. This "advertising business" was one of Pomeroy's specialties, and he was exceedingly adept at it. In the hands of a genius it was even possible to make the same bit of space yield multiple revenue. "T. J. Morgan came into the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly one Sunday with six different covers for one book, each with a different advertisement."[3] The Illinois State Federation of Labor had not previously embarked on the publication field,[4] and Pomeroy had con-

[1] William C. Pomeroy, interview.

[2] This was not the "Skinny" Madden who later figures so prominently in Chicago labor history. Michael H. Madden was a printer by trade, a member of the Chicago Typographical Union, and president of that organization for a time.

He seems to have inspired great affection in every one who knew him. He was editor of the *Steam Shovel and Dredge Magazine* for the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen for many years until his death in 1925. In the tributes to him printed then he is spoken of as "beloved," a "grand old man," who had "a heart that was filled with charity and love."

Pomeroy says of him, "Mike Madden was the greatest man the organized labor movement ever produced in this state. His only weakness was that he loved the limelight—all of us do."—Interview.

In the opinion of Charles Dold, "Mike was a pretty good fellow, but Pomeroy had him under his thumb."—Interview. This seems to summarize the situation.

[3] Charles Dold, interview.

[4] Certain individuals, in 1890, planned to get out a Labor Day souvenir under the name of the Illinois State Federation of Labor and got the consent of the Executive Board by trickery—representing to each member that the others had approved it. They had to drop it when President John C. Harding sent a circular letter to the prospective advertisers.—John C. Harding, interview. The *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat* reports, however, that the next convention authorized a souvenir journal for the following Labor Day (November 13, 1891).

fined his operations to Chicago.[1] Shortly after Madden's election the State Federation began to issue an *Official Annual Labor Gazette*, the "advertising department" of which, as the caustic *Rights of Labor* had remarked about another publication of the same sort, was under the management of "that ingenious man of letters, William Columbus Pomeroy."[2]

The accounts of Secretary-Treasurer W. H. Rippe show $500 paid to the State Federation in 1893 by John W. Connorton, who was associated with Pomeroy, for the privilege of publishing the *Official Annual Labor Gazette*; and he offered to renew his contract for three years on the same basis. There was some doubt expressed in the convention as to whether it could bind the Federation for three years, but Connorton's proposition was finally accepted.[3] This contract was never carried out, however, for the downstaters came into power and determined to put a stop to such publications.

Charles J. Riefler says,

The *Labor Gazette* was a graft on the part of the Chicago bunch of Pomeroy's. When I became president they wrote down to me and asked for the State Federation's o. k. to it. I refused, and they said they would get it out anyway; so I got up a circular letter and sent it to all the advertisers

[1] The Trade and Labor Assembly had furnished the authorization for his productions. For example, in the Crerar Library may be found an "Official Labor Gazette (1892). . . . . Published under the auspices of the Trade and Labor Assembly of Chicago. . . . . Compiled by Wm. C. Pomeroy, Chicago, Ill."

[2] The title-page of the 1893 directory reads: "Official Annual Labor Gazette, 1893. Columbian Edition. Published under the Auspices of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, containing An Accurate Roster of the Subordinate Trades Organizations, With Directory Giving Officers' Addresses, Time and Place of Meetings, Proceedings of the Annual Conventions of the American Federation of Labor and the Illinois Federation of Labor. Also Advertisements of Reliable Business Houses." The books were printed by William C. Hollister Brothers'. . . . . Eight-Hour Herald Print. . . . . in Chicago. Two annual issues bearing the name of the Illinois State Federation of Labor (1893 and 1895) are still extant, but no copy of the 1894 edition seems to have been preserved, if any was published.

[3] *Proc.* (1893), p. 38.

in the last issue, telling them that if they gave any advertising to the book they were not helping the State Federation."[1]

The convention of 1895, intent on reform, provided that the Executive Board should issue all official publications,[2] and a year later it was resolved that "we are opposed to the publishing of the proceedings of this Federation in book form when advertising is made a part of such publication," and "if any person undertakes the publication of any book purporting to be the proceedings or affairs of this Federation without its consent, President and Secretary stand instructed to prosecute the guilty parties."[3]

Another temporary manifestation of the Pomeroy period in the history of the Illinois State Federation was a colonization scheme. At the Galesburg convention in 1893, when thousands of men were out of work as a result of the panic, William C. Pomeroy moved that a committee be appointed to prepare a plan of governmental colonization. This was done, and Pomeroy became chairman. Toward the close of the convention a report from this committee was adopted, as follows:

"That the Executive Board . . . . is hereby instructed to have prepared and published a plan of governmental colonization, which will tend to reduce to a minimum the surplus population of our cities, and at the same time provide homes and occupations for many citizens now homeless and unemployed."[4]

[1] C. J. Riefler, interview.

[2] *Peoria Herald*, October 11, 1895.

[3] *Proc.* (1896), p. 14. Following the Bloomington convention of 1897, Secretary-Treasurer P. F. Doyle postponed the publication of the official proceedings because he had "authentic information. . . . that unscrupulous individuals were endeavoring to obtain the report in order to insert the same in an advertising scheme under the head of a labor directory."—Official announcement in *Chicago Federationist*, March 23, 1898, signed by P. F. Doyle. Also, resolution of Executive Board to same effect, reported in *Chicago Federationist*, April 27, 1898.

[4] *Proc.* (1893), pp. 7–8, 42.

The project never came before the State Federation again, but with this authorization to back them Pomeroy and Madden seem to have headed a delegation which journeyed all the way to California to inspect possible sites for a colony.[1] On their return, Madden explained the project in a long letter to the *Chicago Times*.[2]

In the winter of 1893–94, said he, Mayor Harrison had appointed committees of prominent citizens to care for starving and homeless workers by distributing food and by endeavoring to find employment for them. Here, apparently to add prestige to the colonization scheme outlined in the rest of the letter, he listed the names of more than a hundred prominent Chicagoans who had served on these committees. But the workers had felt the need of more permanent remedies. The Illinois State Federation of Labor had found that the farm was being deserted, that those who should have remained in the country were attracted by the glare and glitter of city life, and were rushing in to Chicago, where they were becoming dependents. So the Federation had instructed its Executive Board to prepare a colonization plan.

"We received many invitations to visit various sections of the West and South," Madden's letter to the *Times* continued, "but lack of time has prevented us from investigating, except in Colorado and California. Having ascertained the ease with which fruit farming is learned and carried on, we determined our first efforts should be directed to that industry." The first colony is to be established upon a tract of land in the San Joaquin Valley, seven miles from Merced.

[1] "Messrs. Pomeroy, Madden and Jaffray, of the delegation who went west to inspect certain lands with a view to the colonization of workingmen, returned to this city on the 23rd instant."—Item in *Eight-Hour Herald*, May 25, 1894.

[2] Reprinted and credited to the *Chicago Times* in a clipping found in the Morgan Scrapbook (University of Chicago), probably from the *Chicago Labor Gazette*.

From the standpoint of productivity the land is unexcelled and we will have within a few days fruit and wine exhibits at our headquarters which will demonstrate beyond a doubt the character of the soil and the diversification of its products. . . . . On this land any semi-tropical fruit may be raised, while vegetables and other farm products yield two crops or more a year.

Then he gives details:

The tract comprises four square miles, or 2,560 acres, and will be divided into 224 ten-acre fruit farms, the village site and common property utilizing the remainder. . . . . That means also that there will be 224 families located in the colony, which will be known as Cosmopoles. Recognizing the dislike with which some people used to city life regard existence in the country. . . . we have planned to retain the essential social features of urban homes, coupled with the charms of country life. The dwellings, 224 in number, will form a double row of cottages. . . . . Within the circle of dwellings will be the storehouses, school, shops and other necessary buildings of the community. From this center will radiate the water and light systems. The reservoir of the irrigation system will also be in the circle. . . . . Each dwelling in the circle is nearest to the land which its occupants will farm. . . . . The tools of the colony will be owned in common, as will the warehouses and other common necessities. The farms will be the property of the individual. No person, however, may own more than ten acres. We estimate that the common property, 300 acres, will produce sufficient to maintain the community, the product of the separate ten-acre holdings being individual profit.

As for the government of the colony, it will be,

"vested in the colonists themselves. Possibly the initiative and referendum will be the means of enacting legislation. The land will be apportioned on the single-tax plan, and we propose to prove beyond a doubt the practicability of that system of disposing of land privileges.[1]

In selecting the colonists, great care will be taken to secure persons of good moral habits and diversified trades. No families will be placed on the land "until spring, when tree planting will commence. Until such time as the trees are bearing we will support ourselves by raising vegetables, for which there is a great demand in California."

[1] Pomeroy, the antifaddist, must have chuckled as he composed this paragraph.

We do not expect to turn out millionaires, and shall feel satisfied in furnishing happy, healthy homes for such as may by their industry deserve them. For those who seek to obtain the necessaries of life without an equivalent in labor we have no place. This is no Utopia, nor even an Altruria, only a plain, everyday business proposition, whose first rule is "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread". . . . .

M. H. MADDEN, *President of the Illinois State Federation of Labor*

The writer has been able to find no other record of this weird scheme. Richard Powers recalls, "that was the time Madden went out to California. . . . . I don't know who paid his way. . . . . Lyman J. Gage, the banker, was in it perhaps." But anyway, "Pomeroy was the head and tail of it," and it "died a-borning."[1]

MORGAN AND PLANK 10

By 1893 "defeats in strikes, depression in trade, a rapidly falling labour market, and court prosecutions,"[2] were everywhere proving powerful allies to those leaders who, ever since the momentary successes of 1886, had been agitating for independent political action. The panic of that year, with its resulting unemployment and wage-cuts, determined the issue.

The Galesburg convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor assembled on November 14, 1893. The problem of out-of-work was the one big topic around which the convention revolved. The distress brought on by the panic was "so widespread that the mind stands appalled at its contemplation," said President Madden; but

Unlike previous financial or commercial disturbances, the workman, now conscious of his power, and having awakened to the realization that nineteen-twentieths of the burdens of such upheavals fall upon him, and those depending upon him, desires to find the cause and also the remedy to prevent, as far as in him lies, a recurrence of the same.[3]

[1] Richard W. Powers, interview.

[2] Commons and associates, *History of Labour in the United States*, II, 509.

[3] *Proc.* (1893), pp. 5–6.

In this frame of mind the delegates turned to independent political action. The following paragraph became a part of the preamble to the constitution:

> The repeated deception of the laboring people by the Republican and Democratic parties emphasizes the necessity for independent political action on the part of the producers, and we declare that the reforms necessary to a successful solution of the labor problem can only be attained by entering the political arena with the firm determination to obtain administrative supremacy through the ballot box.[1]

Furthermore, it was resolved, on motion of Pomeroy, "that the Executive Board be and is instructed to call within six months a conference of representatives of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, the Farmers' Alliance, Knights of Labor, and such other industrial bodies as may be deemed essential," for the purpose of concerted political action on the part of producers. Representation was to be "three for each body, and said bodies shall defray the expenses of their respective representatives."[2]

Meanwhile the American Federation of Labor had yielded enough to the insistence of Socialist and progressive leaders who favored a labor party policy to submit a "political programme" for the consideration of affiliated unions. The program had been drawn up by T. J. Morgan, but it "received a more than passive support from Gompers and P. J. McGuire."[3] In 1894 this political program was being discussed in labor circles all over the country. "Not until comparatively late did any opposition make itself manifest. Then it took the form of a demand by such conservative leaders as Gompers, McGuire, and Strasser, that Plank 10, with its pledge in favour of 'the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution,' be

[1] *Proc.* (1893), p. 21.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[3] Commons and associates, *op. cit.*, II, 510.

stricken out."[1] Of course, to the Socialist Tommy Morgan, this was the heart of the whole program.

Such was the situation when President Madden, carrying out the instructions of the Galesburg convention, issued a call for a conference on independent political action to meet at Springfield on July 2, 1894. The call was addressed "To All Labor Unions, Labor Organizations, Industrial Associations and Political Reform Societies of the State of Illinois," and proposed as a basis of discussion the eleven planks in the political program submitted by the American Federation of Labor.[2]

When the Populists saw this attempt to unite the forces of labor, they invited the workers to come to their convention called for May 29, also at Springfield. Thomas J. Morgan headed a delegation from Chicago and submitted his proposed American Federation of Labor program to the Populist gathering. The convention adopted all except Plank 10, and Morgan went home disgruntled. The *Arbeiter Zeitung*, organ of the radicals, lamented the outcome; it thought Plank 10 was the only reason for an independent party.[3]

On July 2, at the time set for the convening of the State Federation's political conference, only a handful of delegates were present in the Hall of Representatives at Springfield. The reason was the great Pullman strike led by Eugene V.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 511.

[2] The American Federation of Labor political program was: (1) compulsory education; (2) direct legislation; (3) a legal eight-hour workday; (4) sanitary inspection of workshop, mine, and home; (5) liability of employers for injury to health, body, or life; (6) the abolition of the sweating system; (8) the municipal ownership of street cars, and gas and electric plants for public distribution of light, heat, and power; (9) the nationalization of telegraphs, telephones, railroads, and mines; (10) the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution; (11) the principle of referendum in all legislation.—"Official call," in *Eight-Hour Herald*, May 10, 1894.

[3] Mittleman, "Chicago Labor in Politics," *Jour. Pol. Econ.*, XXVIII, 424.

Debs; trains were at a standstill. The convention languished and recessed, waiting for from sixty to eighty delegates from Chicago who were stranded *en route*. Pomeroy telegraphed from Decatur, "Leave here at daybreak tomorrow in wagons. Will arrive at 7:30. No non-union road can carry us."[1] So the convention, or such of it as had arrived, appointed a Reception Committee and waited.

Next morning the sessions began. About 125 delegates[2] were in the hall, representing every shade of labor and reform politics. People's party men, Socialists, anarchists, single-taxers, Knights of Labor, trade unionists, Republican and Democratic healers—all were present.[3]

Michael H. Madden assumed the chair, which action was loudly questioned by many delegates, who claimed it was an industrial convention and not one of the State Federation of Labor. On a vote he was elected chairman.[4] He then delivered an address which "painted in grand style the difference between capital and labor, calling upon the members to stand together for harmonization, as right now was the most critical period in the history of the entire continent since the late rebellion."[5]

Before the gathering got down to business an incident occurred which reveals some of the influences at work to make stony the path of an independent Labor party. A

[1] Clipping in Morgan Scrapbook (University of Chicago), dated July 2, 1894.

[2] Report of Executive Board in 1894 "Proceedings," *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895).

[3] "About half those delegates that went there had their fare paid by some political gang," says Richard Powers.—Interview.

The credentials of Oscar Neebe and Michael Schwab, pardoned anarchists of Haymarket fame, evoked a hot debate. Many delegates objected that the presence of anarchists in the convention would throttle the cause of reform, but they were finally seated, by a close vote.—*Chicago Times*, July 3, 1894.

[4] *Chicago Times*, July 3, 1894.

[5] *Ibid.*

delegate rose in the convention and read from a morning newspaper that William C. Pomeroy had wired to County Clerk Wulff at Chicago a message in substance as follows: "Wire me $100 at once; badly needed in the convention." This created a sensation. It was charged that Pomeroy, Russell, and other Cook County delegates were engaged in an attempt to secure indorsement of Wulff's candidacy for state treasurer. Pomeroy boldly declared that he was a friend of Henry Wulff, that he owed Wulff $160, and was not ashamed to tell it. Mr. Wulff, he declared, was a friend of labor, and that was why he had applied to him for funds.[1] After a report by an Investigating Committee and a grand uproar, a motion to exonerate Pomeroy and Russell finally carried, only about one-third of the delegates voting, according to the *Chicago Times*.[2]

The report of the Committee on Platform again stirred the discordant elements in the convention to the verge of dissolution. A. L. Maxwell, a People's party leader, read the majority report as follows:

> The wage earners of the State of Illinois, in convention assembled, at a time when the growing feeling of brotherhood is attended by the heroic efforts of toilers in behalf of their oppressed fellow workers, declare for political action.
>
> Recognizing the beneficent working of the postal system, we demand the immediate nationalization of the telegraph and telephone, to be followed by governmental ownership of the railroads and mines, and we further demand the municipal ownership of street railways, gas and electric plants for the public distribution of light, heat, and power.

[1] "It was simply a political deal," says Richard Powers. "Wulff would have sent more than $100 to Pomeroy. He did that as a politician; it was not unusual." —Interview.

[2] July 4, 1894, dateline, in Morgan Scrapbook; also *Times* dispatch dated July 5 and clippings from other Chicago papers in Morgan Scrapbook. A country delegate moved that every delegate holding office in either of the old parties be disqualified for a seat in the convention, but Chairman Madden ruled it out of order.

The land is the heritage of the people. Therefore we condemn existing laws which permit the alien ownership of large bodies of land held for speculative purposes and declare in favor of such taxation as will compel the using of land to make ownership profitable and also favor local option in taxation.

Believing that no general prosperity can be obtained without an adequate supply of money, which cannot be controlled by private corporations, we demand the issuance by the general government of legal tender notes in sufficient volume to meet the requirements of the business of our country.

We unequivocally condemn the policy of issuing interest-bearing bonds in time of peace.

Recognizing education to be the most potent agency for civilization, we favor such laws as will compel the attendance at school of all children of school age.

The great and unusual disturbances in labor circles force upon us the inevitable conviction that the time has now arrived in which encroachment of capital upon labor must cease and that the interests of the general public demand the passage of such laws as will give adequate protection and relief to the oppressed employes of the railways, in the factory, shop and mine; therefore we demand the following:

1. A legal eight-hour work day.
2. Sanitary inspection of workshop, mine, and home.
3. Liability of employers for injury to health, body or life
4. The abolition of the contract system in all public work.
5. The abolition of the sweating system.
6. Proportional representation.
7. The right to govern resting with the governed, we demand the adoption of the initiation and referendum system of legislation.[1]

A comparison of this platform with the American Federation of Labor political program drawn up by Tommy Morgan shows that it covers every feature of that program except Plank 10. In addition, it includes a single-tax plank, a money plank, and a demand for proportional representation.

[1] *Eight-Hour Herald*, July 10, 1894; also *Chicago Times*, *Chicago Record*, and clippings from other Chicago papers in Morgan Scrapbook (University of Chicago).

But in the eyes of Morgan, to omit Plank 10 and to refuse a decisive break with the old parties was treason to the cause of labor. He brought in a minority report which declared that the right to life, liberty, and happiness mentioned in the Declaration of Independence were delusions without economic equality, which depended upon the possession, control, and use of the gifts of nature and the products of art and science. "For this, we, the people, on this Fourth of July join hands and pledge our lives and our honor never again to vote another Republican or Democratic ticket, never again to support politically any man or woman who refuses to indorse the principles herein set forth." Morgan's minority report concluded by presenting as a basis of immediate action the entire political program of the American Federation of Labor introduced in the call for the conference.[1]

At this point George Schilling withdrew; he could not agree to such denunciations of the old parties. He would probably vote a Democratic ticket in the future, and he thought a good many others in the convention would do likewise.[2]

Michael Britzius, a Socialist, opened the discussion of Morgan's minority report with a "long and tiresome" speech. He was followed by a single-taxer, who declared that the Socialists and the striking trade unionists were both wrong; the single-taxers were the only people who knew what they wanted and how to get it. This brought him frequent interruptions, "the house being in an indescribable state of turmoil." Pomeroy attacked both the preceding speakers, and he charged T. J. Morgan with having misrepresented the

[1] Clippings in Morgan Scrapbook (University of Chicago), including *Chicago Record* article, dated July 4, 1894.

[2] Mr. Grady, of the Chicago Bricklayers' Union, also asked to have his name dropped from the roll of delegates. He did not indorse all the Democrats had done, but he still looked hopefully to them for good work in the interest of the masses.—*Ibid.*

action of the American Federation of Labor. At this Morgan sprang to his feet and handed over a copy of the proceedings, but Pomeroy repeated his charge, retorting eloquently that there was only one difference between the majority and minority reports: under the latter the workingmen would trade Carnegie, Frick, and Pullman for another master—the state. The state would have but one boss, T. J. Morgan. "Would you take the ball and chain from your left leg," said he, "and put it on your right leg?"

So the debate raged on. Some, like Austin, of East St. Louis, were willing to compromise for the sake of unity; he declared that, though a Socialist, he thought Plank 10 too radical for the masses who would otherwise cast one hundred thousand votes for a united labor ticket. Others were more dogmatic, and as A. L. Maxwell made the closing speech, the Populist and Socialist factions almost came to blows.[1]

On roll call Morgan's substitute report went down to defeat, 59 to 49, "the country and trades union delegates voting almost solidly against it."[2] At this the Socialists were preparing to leave the hall, when Henry D. Lloyd, the prominent single-taxer, introduced a compromise version of the rejected Plank 10:

1. We recommend independent political action by the bodies represented in this conference.

2. To that purpose we recommend the officials of these bodies to take immediate steps to hold a national convention to perfect plans for such political action.

3. Pending the organization of such a party we recommend those we represent in this conference to vote for those candidates of the people's party at the coming election who will pledge themselves to the principles of the collective ownership by the people of all such means of production and distribution *as the people elect to operate* for the commonwealth.

Roll call on Mr. Lloyd's supplementary plank stood 50 yea,

[1] *Chicago Times*, dated July 5, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

[2] *Chicago Record*, dated July 5, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

50 nay; it was declared lost. But Morgan claimed 54 affirmative votes had been cast, and a recount showed 51 yea, 50 nay. This time the Socialists cheered; it was their victory.[1]

In return, the Socialists agreed to an amalgamation with the People's party, and the state ticket already nominated by that party was indorsed. It was also agreed that in localities where Populists had already nominated legislative candidates no opposition candidates would be run, that the machinery of the People's party would be used wherever possible, and that in no instance would a separate labor ticket enter the field.[2]

[1] *Chicago Times*, dated July 5, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

[2] *Chicago Record*, dated July 5, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

CHAPTER VII

THE DÉNOUEMENT

POMEROY AND MORGAN AS KILKENNY CATS

Back in Chicago, though some were convinced that reform and labor forces should confine their efforts to state candidates, thus minimizing the ill-will of local politicians, the Cook County Central Committee of the People's party attempted to hold a convention at West Twelfth Street Turner Hall on August 18 for the purpose of nominating a county ticket. The result was one of the most turbulent political gatherings ever held in Chicago. Pandemonium reigned from noon until seven-thirty, and the meeting adjourned (when the Central Committee put out the lights) without even electing a temporary chairman. Morgan and the Populists, who were supposed to have had charge of the "machine," had exercised extreme precautions to see that only properly accredited delegates entered the hall, but the howling mob of heelers outside had burst open the doors. The Committee charged connivance by the police, who were supposedly guarding the entrance; they said the meeting was packed by city-hall politicians intent on indorsing Democrats. The Pomeroy-Ryan faction, accused of being in league with officeholders in the old parties, hurled counter charges at Morgan and the Committee, which, they said, had adjourned the meeting because trade unionists, not Populists and Socialists, were in the majority.[1]

The sequel was two conventions. The Morgan wing of the People's party met in Uhlich's Hall on August 24, and there, protected against the intrusions of uncertified dele-

[1] Clippings in Morgan Scrapbook from *Chicago Times* and *Chicago Herald*, August 19, 1894; *Eight-Hour Herald*, August 25, 1894.

gates by stalwart Turners armed with fencing foils, they nominated a "middle-of-the-road" ticket from which old-party candidates were excluded.

A week later Pomeroy and Ryan assembled their delegates at Bricklayers' Hall and asserted that they were the real People's party. They denounced the "rag, tag, and bob-tail remnants of socialism, anarchism, and other . . . . intolerable and un-American theories" put forward by a "coterie of political mountebanks headed by the socialist agitator Tommy Morgan." To demonstrate their true Americanism they nominated a ticket made up largely of old-party politicians, mostly Democrats, and adjourned. "The issue is clear," they said, "trade unionism versus socialism. Take your choice."[1]

Now the time set for the Belleville convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor rolled around. Morgan went down to get the Uhlich's Hall ticket indorsed as the true representatives of the People's party and labor. Pomeroy went to prevent any such consummation, or perhaps even to have the Bricklayers' Hall slate labeled genuine.

Ninety-nine delegates assembled at Belleville on October 9, 1894, the largest attendance at a State Federation convention since the initial meeting in 1884. Tommy Morgan was on hand in force. So was Pomeroy, and that energetic individual went out and hired a band to lead his followers through the public square shouting the campaign cry:

> Whoopla! whoopla! we are the men,
> Come all this way to knock Plank 10.[2]

There were "country" or "downstate" delegates present, too; and though inclined to the view that the snake of Socialism

[1] Clippings from various Chicago papers in Morgan Scrapbook; Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

[2] Charles J. Riefler, interview. Interview with Morgan printed in *Chicago Journal*, October 10, 1894.

must be scotched they were no less determined to end the domination of the "Chicago push" in State Federation affairs.

Morgan won the first tilt. Phoenix Assembly, of Chicago, sent three delegates, while under the constitution it was entitled to only one; this discovery left W. C. Roberts, printer, and J. J. Ryan, president of the Building Trades Council, out in the cold. Thereupon Mr. Hart, of the Theatrical Stage Employees' Union, announced that on account of a strike in the trade two delegates from his union were urgently called to return to Chicago, and he requested that in the event of their leaving the convention Roberts and Ryan be admitted as their proxies. This brought on an acrimonious discussion, during which Morgan's followers pertinently suggested that the two returning delegates rise in the convention and be recognized. This disclosed the fact that they were not present and that no one had seen them. The proposal to admit proxies was overwhelmingly defeated.[1]

On the second day one of Morgan's faction submitted an amendment to the constitution of the Federation: "*Provided*, that no one shall represent a union who is not actively engaged at the business his union represents or is an officer thereof." This was a blow at Pomeroy and his freebooters. The understanding was that the vote upon it would be "a strict division of the house on the Socialistic question." It was rejected, 49 to 27.[2]

Then came the report of the Executive Committee on the Springfield conference, including the platform and the modified Plank 10 there adopted. To the surprise of most of the

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, October 10, 1894; *Chicago Journal*, clipping in Morgan Scrapbook.

[2] *Chicago Tribune*, October 10, 1894. The official proceedings in the 1895 *Official Annual Labor Gazette* show this amendment reported favorably from committee, but there is no record of the action taken. The 1894 proceedings are quite evidently incomplete and misleading, perhaps falsified, at this point and elsewhere.

delegates, it was indorsed unanimously amid great enthusiasm, and the demonstration closed with three cheers for the People's party and organized labor.[1] At the same time resolutions were adopted, "That we cordially and heartily approve the platform and resolutions adopted at that conference without the elimination of a single line"; and that "we earnestly urge the workingmen of this grand state . . . . to work earnestly and vigorously in support of the candidates officially recognized by the county, state, and national committee of the People's party as the only party that has indorsed the principles of the Springfield conference. . . . ."[2] This amounted to an indorsement of the Uhlich's Hall ticket, for it was the one looked upon as bona fide by the State Committee of the People's party. Pomeroy, who had doubtless hoped to prevent this very action, let it go through without opposition; he was a wily enough politician to save his face when he lacked votes.

But re-enforcements were arriving from Chicago. On the morning of the third day fourteen delegates from plumbers' and steamfitters' unions presented their credentials,[3] and were seated despite the protest of a minority of the Credentials Committee that this would "establish a precedent dangerous to the continuation of the Illinois State Federation of Labor."[4] Furthermore, on a direct division over socialism, Pomeroy could count on the support of the country delegates against Morgan. In fact, he had already struck a bargain with the downstate single-taxers. This cooked Morgan's goose.

[1] *Chicago Record*, October 11, 1894; *Chicago Times*, same date.

[2] *Chicago Times*, October 11, 1894; *Chicago Record*, same date. This resolution does not appear in the official proceedings.

[3] Interview with Morgan in *Chicago Journal*, October 13, 1894.

[4] "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895).

The new alignment first became evident in connection with a lengthy report from Morgan, as chairman of the Committee on Unemployed. His elaborate, and doubtless very able, report was brusquely set aside in favor of the abolition of land monopoly and the single-tax.[1] Then came the election of officers, with the presidency going to the downstaters in the person of C. J. Riefler.

The final blow fell when Pomeroy moved "that our delegate to the American Federation of Labor be instructed to vote for the adoption of all planks in the political platform of that body, with the exception of Plank 10, and to substitute for that the following: 'The abolition of land monopoly.'" In vain the Socialists tried to save the day by substituting the Springfield compromise plank invented by Henry D. Lloyd; it was voted down, 58 to 24. Pomeroy's motion then carried, 61 ayes to 20 nays. It was time for a shout from the "Chicago gang":

> Whoopla! Whoopla! Whoopla, ho!
> We are the people from Chicago.
> We are the people—we are the men,
> We are the people who killed Plank Ten.
> They were easy—just like wax;
> We knocked them out with the Single Tax.
> Whoopla! Whoopla! Whoopla, ho!
> We are the people from Chicago.[2]

Morgan was downed. "Socialism in the State Federation of Labor is killed," announced William C. Pomeroy. "The trade unionists have put the seal of condemnation upon the aims of the Morgan socialists. We are satisfied."[3]

True, Socialism was outvoted; but in vanquishing Morgan, Pomeroy had greased the skids for his own down-

[1] "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 143.

[2] Composed by Pomeroy at the Belleville convention of 1894. Quoted to the author by C. J. Riefler.

[3] *Chicago Dispatch*, October 12, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

fall. His bargain with the downstaters had provided that in return for support against Morgan and Plank 10 they were to name the officers of the Federation. Once in control, the downstaters set about to clean up the Illinois State Federation of Labor.[1]

THE END OF ANOTHER INDEPENDENT POLITICAL MOVEMENT

Factional conflicts continued in Chicago. The State Central Committee declared that the Uhlich's Hall candidates were the regularly nominated representatives of the party in Cook County; but the Bricklayers' Hall faction carried the contest to the Board of Review. As election day approached excited hearings took place. The Board decided that neither faction had polled 2 per cent of the vote at the last election and hence neither was entitled to a place on the ballot by convention nomination; they would have to go on by petition. This practically wrecked the Bricklayers' Hall lineup, for many of its candidates were Democratic nominees and could not appear on the ballot a second time by petition. The election commissioners awarded the coveted place in the column with the state Populist ticket to the

[1] There are various versions of what actually happened behind the scenes at Belleville. The story told by Charles J. Riefler regarding his own election seems most reasonable and convincing.

The downstaters (says Riefler) saw that the Chicago delegation was divided into two camps—Socialists under Morgan on one side and "simon-pure" trade unionists led by Pomeroy on the other. So they determined to name the officers of the Federation. ("There had always been a sort of hostility from the outside toward Chicago," supplements R. W. Schuch. "It was a hotbed of agitation.") The downstaters drew up a slate, and a committee took it to Pomeroy. "We give you just one hour to agree," the committee told him. Pomeroy hemmed and hawed and said he would let them know in the morning, but the committee stood firm. If Pomeroy refused their terms they were ready to go to Morgan; they had approached Pomeroy first merely because they were opposed to Socialism. Finally Pomeroy accepted the terms, though he did get to substitute Walter Groves, of Chicago, for secretary in place of Bush (Peoria) who had been the choice of the downstaters. Bush consented to the substitution, and got the 1895 convention for Peoria in return. This program went through.—Interview, Charles J. Riefler.

Uhlich Hall wing; and at this the Bricklayers' Hall faction asked to have its ticket withdrawn, but the ballots had already been printed. Then they issued a public letter to unionists requesting them not to vote for Bricklayers' Hall candidates, but to support Populists.[1]

At the polls the Populists of Cook County cast about thirty-five thousand votes for their ticket but elected no one.[2] There had been a Republican landslide over the whole state. For state treasurer the People's party nominee polled 59,000 votes, of which 34,000 came from Cook County; the winning candidate (Wulff, Republican) received 455,886, and his Democratic opponent 322,459.

After election, the People's party began to disintegrate. The Socialists objected to a plan for establishing locals with charters from the party itself; this would destroy their own separate organization. They began to view the People's party as a party of small merchants and small farmers, "who, beginning to feel their impending doom . . . . ask the workingman to assist them in patching up our present capitalistic system." They withdrew.[3]

Partly crippled, the party entered the mayoralty campaign in the spring election of 1895, but it drew about half the votes now that it drew in the previous election. That discouraged some of the elements that still clung to the party in the hope that it would become "the party of the American workingmen." What was left joined the Democrats in an effort to elect Bryan president of the United States in 1896."[4]

The story of the labor political movement in Cook County and Illinois is typical of its career in other sections. The American Federation of Labor was not committed to an

[1] *Chicago Times*, October 13, 1894; October 30, 1894; November 1, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

[2] Clippings in Morgan Scrapbook; Mittleman, *op. cit.*, p. 425. The vote for Republican winners was in the neighborhood of one hundred thirty-five thousand.

[3] Mittleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 425–26.

[4] *Ibid.*

independent political program, having merely submitted the subject for a referendum; "locally, however, the trade unions were unequivocally in politics . . . . A majority of [their candidates] ran upon the People's party or 'Populist' ticket. In many localities the trade unions virtually were part of the Populist party machinery."[1] In November, 1894, the *American Federationist* listed more than three hundred union members who were candidates for some elective office. Only six were successful.

Largely on account of these failures, Gompers and other leaders argued against the adoption of the proposed political program at the next American Federation of Labor Convention, held in Denver during December. The preamble was first struck out; the now famous Plank 10 was rejected by the substitution of a land plank,[2] just as in the Illinois State Federation; then, after each of the other planks had been approved separately, the platform as a whole was rejected. In revenge, the Socialists united with the friends of McBride and elected him president of the American Federation of Labor in place of Gompers.[3]

What is to be said in general of this attempt at independent political action in the nineties?

In the first place, it rose out of an acute economic depression and was an expression of discontent. When its first efforts were unsuccessful, when employment conditions began to improve, and when the Democrats of 1896 offered a rallying-point for discontented elements, the independent political movement on the part of labor evaporated.

[1] Commons and associates, *History of Labour in the United States*, II, 512.

[2] Some of the delegates interpreted this land plank to mean the single tax, "but the majority probably acted upon the principle 'anything to beat socialism.' " —*Ibid.*, II, 513.

[3] *Ibid.*, II, 512-13.

That old bugaboo of labor parties—dissension within—was plainly in evidence in 1894. After fusion with the Populists the movement contained such a conglomerate accumulation of labor and reform societies and "fads" of every description that harmony was next to impossible. An ardent reformer of any sort—whether trade unionist, single-taxer, socialist, or whatnot—is likely to be a one-idea man, and a reform party always has the difficult task of reconciling the viewpoints of many diverse and stubborn elements, each convinced of the supreme importance of its particular hobby.

The main dissension was that between the Socialist and the non-Socialist trade unionists. The movement had been initiated by the Socialists in the American Federation of Labor, and Plank 10 of the political program submitted by them was the chief bone of contention. But in Chicago, particularly, there were innumerable other divisions within the ranks.

> One of the most lamentable phases of the political labor sky in Chicago is the unreliability and divided state of its leaders. An endless number of factions has grown up in the political labor arena here, each led by a man at enmity with all other such leaders. . . . . These factions and agitators are hopelessly divided. They hate each other worse than they all together hate the common enemy. There is the Ryan faction, the "Doc" Taylor and Chris O'Brien faction, the single taxers, the old line populists, the regular trade unionists and half a dozen other offshoots, each led by a hungry agitator. While this state of things exists no solid progress can be made in a political way for the betterment of the working peoples' condition.[1]

There was no leadership capable of inspiring confidence in the voters. Morgan was a Socialist, which damned him in the sight of many within and without the labor movement. A good many so-called "labor skates" were able to make themselves prominent in the party, and they did its reputation no good. Most of the other leaders were comparatively

[1] *Chicago Dispatch*, November 19, 1894.

unknown, though some, like Henry D. Lloyd, had had their names before the public. The Illinois State Federation of Labor did not possess sufficient prestige to head up the movement, even had it been able to act harmoniously; the American Federation of Labor took no positive steps to provide national leadership. And of course the angry differences displayed in labor conventions in the state repelled many people; "if the working classes cannot agree among themselves on a line of political action they can scarcely hope to secure the confidence of the public."[1]

Among workingmen, too, there was a distrust of politics in general—based, perhaps, on long experience with its devotees. "Most of the men," says R. W. Schuch, "were opposed to having anything to do with politics. The feeling was one of suspicion that those fostering politics were doing it to get something for themselves."[2]

The *Eight-Hour Herald* contended for the view that the third party would do best to confine its efforts at first to electing legislative and congressional candidates, and it pointed to the turmoil in the Cook County nominating convention and the resulting split as a justification of its wisdom. Certain it is that going after the county offices brought the party a great deal of unhelpful attention from political freebooters and ward-healers.

Finally, the election of 1894 was a clean Republican sweep over the entire country, interpreted as a rebuke to the Cleveland administration. "There is no question but that under any other conditions the independent political movement would have assumed far greater proportions than it did."[3]

[1] *Eight-Hour Herald*, August 25, 1894.

[2] Interview.

[3] *Eight-Hour Herald*, November 10, 1894.

"As it was," continued the same paper, "the people's party in this county polled 30,000 votes, a respectable showing under the circumstances," particularly when the internal dissensions are taken into account. But, as we have seen, dissensions continued after the election as before, the party faded out, and by 1896 organized labor in Illinois and elsewhere had discarded another attempt at independent political action.

HOUSECLEANING IN THE FEDERATION: THE FALL OF POMEROY

Now we return to the State Federation of Labor, which at Belleville had passed into the hands of the downstaters as a result of Pomeroy's political battle with Morgan.

The program of the downstaters from 1894 to 1897, relates Charles J. Riefler, "was to clean up the Federation and get it out of the hands of those who would use it for personal gain and for political purposes."[1] Pomeroy's "Chicago gang" made a serious blunder. They invited President Riefler to the city, entertained him, and in order to impress him told him some of the deals they had put through. "I just drank it all in," he says, "and believe me, we used it to good advantage later on."

Pomeroy had managed to keep one retainer in office under the Belleville bargain; this was Walter Groves, the secretary-treasurer.[2] The next convention was to be at Peoria, and as the date approached downstate leaders began to consider the situation. If the "Chicago gang" hoped to recapture the Federation they might have the secretary forget to send the convention call to the country movement. Riefler wrote to Quincy, Jacksonville, Galesburg, and other towns just to be certain, and, sure enough, they had received

[1] Interview.

[2] Walter Groves was very much addicted to drink and easily used by Pomeroy on that account, says Richard Powers.—Interview.

no notice of the Peoria gathering. So he had a convention call printed in Springfield and sent it out himself, with a circular stressing the importance of downstate representation. Pomeroy, on the other hand, came from Chicago with fewer delegates than usual. "His finances were cut off, and he couldn't afford to pay the expenses of others." The country delegates "outvoted Chicago two to one and didn't give them anything."[1]

The Chicago delegates had come down to Peoria with axes to grind; up in the Windy City not all was well for the Pomeroyan party. There was revolt in the Trades Assembly. The Printers', Cigarmakers', Boxmakers', Clerks', and other self-respecting Unions had found it impossible to secure fair elections inside, so they were planning to form a new organization free from Pomeroy's domination.[2] Pomeroy probably hoped to get the backing of the State Federation to stave off this rebellion.

The storm broke when Pomeroy rose and moved the indorsement of a fourteen-hundred word document which purported to be "an address prepared by the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly." It attacked as the greatest cause of division within the trade-union movement "the subtle, scheming fanatic who foolishly believes his particular *ism* or fetch will settle all pending difficulties and inaugurate the so-called brotherhood of man, or some other loon dream of an irrational brain." The harum-scarum dreamer in the trade union must be made to give way to "practical" men, Pomeroy continued, and he dilated at length on his conception of "pure and simple" trade unionism "without bangs or frills." So-called "new" movements and all such nonsense must

[1] C. J. Riefler, interview.

[2] Charles Dold, interview. The breakup of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly "was the result of rebellion against Billy Pomeroy and his crooks."—R. W. Schuch, interview.

be sidetracked or strangled in their incipiency, said the document.

George Schilling was up in an instant. He hailed with delight all fads; without them there was no advance, and he hoped every street corner would have its faddist expounding his views. But, said Schilling, getting down to the real issue,

> the faction fight in the trade union movement in Chicago. . . . is not between the Socialist and anti-Socialist, but grew out of the fact that certain influential organizations refused any longer to follow the personal leadership of Mr. Pomeroy. Mr. Pomeroy is a long-headed and a far-seeing man. He has baited his hook here with the sweetest of bait, and expects that the State Federation of Labor are suckers to bite at it, and that he can return to Chicago with the club that you have furnished him with which to beat the brains out of his adversaries.

Pomeroy's assertions that the conflict in the Chicago trade-union movement was between the Socialist and anti-Socialist "are all buncombe," he continued.

> Chicago Typographical Union No. 16 has withdrawn from the Trades Assembly, and there is none more staid, more business-like, and more conservative. Cigarmakers' Union No. 14, which has always followed practical instead of theoretical lines, has withdrawn from the Trades Assembly, and have declared that they will never return as long as Billy Pomeroy and his friends are there.
>
> I care not what you delegates from the country may do. I have warned you, and if Mr. Pomeroy returns to Chicago with your scalps dangling at his belt it is not my funeral, but I do not propose that he shall return to that city with mine.[1]

Pomeroy replied, adding patriotism to his "pure and simple trade unionism" thunder: "I propose to stand by my guns and go down if necessary fighting against the 'fads' and the so-called 'new movements' and against the influence of un-American fanatics . . . . . I am an American and shall govern myself as an American should. You do as you feel inclined."[2]

[1] *Peoria Transcript*, October 10, 1895.

[2] *Ibid.*

Both speeches brought comments from many delegates, and for a while there was "more oratory than was ever exhibited in Peoria."[1]

The vote came on a motion to refer to the Committee on Resolutions, and Pomeroy was defeated, 30 to 21. At the end of a ten-minute recess the committee reported that "all organizations connected with the State Federation of Labor should use their own judgment regarding new theories." It also seized the occasion to denounce "professional tricksters," "political bribers," and "labor skates."[2] Schilling moved that the report be adopted. Pomeroy, never willing to meet defeat on a straight-out vote, surrendered and seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

When it came to the election of officers the downstaters took over the Federation from top to bottom. Riefler was re-elected president by acclamation, Pomeroy seconding his nomination. C. T. Salisbury, of Galesburg, became vice-president, also by acclamation. The only sign of a contest was for the secretary's post. Walter Groves, of Chicago, was nominated for re-election by another Chicago delegate, but he declined; on motion of Pomeroy the election of the downstate nominee, Walter Bush, of Peoria, was by acclamation.

Coming to the Executive Board, Pomeroy "wanted to know if any Chicago man would be allowed on the board by Mr. Schilling."[3] To this Schilling indignantly replied that he did not assume the rôle of dictator to the Federation. "It has been whispered around the city that I said that no Chicago man could be elected to any office from this State Federation. This I most emphatically repudiate. I did say . . . . that I did not propose to vote for any Chicago man."[4]

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Peoria Herald*, October 10, 1895.

[3] *Peoria Herald*, October 11, 1895.

[4] *Ibid.*

At this Pomeroy rose to defend the Chicago delegation against "some very slanderous rumors" which had been maliciously circulated about them. One of the Peoria papers had announced that "the Chicago push was coming to Peoria to run the Convention." Nothing was farther from the truth, said Pomeroy, who knew when he lacked votes.

> The delegates from Chicago have held no caucus nor do they intend to. We want no office from this convention and will accept none. . . . . Chicago did not come here looking for scalps, as we recognized that all affairs of that kind were predestined to grace the girdle of the secretary of the state board of labor statistics. . . . . "

He extended an invitation to the delegates to come to Chicago:

> Come and see us on our native heath and the poor opinions you have held of us will vanish like mists before the piercing sun. We are too big-hearted to descend to the methods which have been so unjustly used against us. We are trade unionists from h—l to breakfast, all wool and a hundred yards wide."[1]

Walter Groves asked the delegates to choose Chicago for the next convention, but, strangely enough, Pomeroy opposed the suggestion. Perhaps he had found an unfavorable reaction to the hint he had thrown out a few moments before. If the convention went to Chicago, he said, there would be five hundred delegates from Chicago and not more than a hundred from the rest of the state, "and the howl about Indians would be worse than ever." He recommended Dwight instead. The vote was East St. Louis 31, Chicago 14, Dwight 5.[2]

The Chicago crowd had been beaten at every point. The delegates were preparing to go home, and a motion had been made that the convention adjourn *sine die*, when Pomeroy rose to execute his last shrewd stroke of strategy in the Illinois State Federation of Labor. What was the date of the convention next year? he asked, and was told it would be in October as usual. But, he said, as 1896 was to be an election

[1] *Peoria Herald*, October 11, 1895.

[2] *Ibid.*

year he thought it unwise to hold the session at that date, as it would give the politicians of both parties a chance to work among the delegates, which would not only arouse suspicion, but would be a great detriment to the cause of trade unionism and to the Illinois State Federation of Labor. He himself was a hearty man in politics and expected to be in the thickest of the fight; if honest, earnest men were nominated for office he would give his services and what little money he had freely. But if he found two men, equally scoundrelly, running—then, if they secured his services they would have to pay liberally and in advance. He said he was like a newspaper in that respect. But let the date of the convention be shifted to November, after election, in order to keep politics out of the State Federation.[1]

Schilling, of course, opposed the change, for he hoped to secure support for the Democrats from the State Federation in 1896 as he had in 1892. And, undoubtedly, had the convention been held before election he would have secured it, for the Illinois State Federation of Labor, as well as the American Federation of Labor, went on record in favor of free silver. But Pomeroy had correctly judged the temper of the downstate delegates whose votes had so effectively silenced Chicago; they were sick of politics of any sort in the labor movement, and he carried his point. The motion to set the date in November went through with a rush, whereupon Pomeroy's fellows let loose with gusto:

> Whoopla, whooplee, whoopla ho,
> We are the people from Chicago.
> We are the people, whom rumor states,
> We are the Chicago "labor skates."
> Political schemes, they are too thin.
> When we turn out we always win.
> Whoopla, whoopla, whoopla ho,
> We are the people from Chicago.

[1] *Ibid.*

Pomeroy was jubilant. "I'll tell you frankly now that it is all over," he said, "that is the only thing the Chicago crowd had decided upon, and we won."[1]

Why had Pomeroy been so eager to eliminate politics from the State Federation in 1896? Of course, he knew that control had been wrested from his hands, and that with the next convention meeting in East St. Louis the downstaters could again outvote him. It further appears that Pomeroy, who had sponsored a free-trade resolution in 1892 and engineered the Bricklayers' Hall alliance with the Chicago Democracy in 1894, had changed his political predilections. While the regular trade-union movement indorsed Bryan's campaign for free silver, we find Pomeroy organizing the "Flying Wedge of the McKinley Labor League," and stumping for the Republicans.[2] Apparently Pomeroy had decided that here was a case of "two men, equally scoundrelly" running for office, and Mark Hanna had bid highest for his services.

At East St. Louis, when the Illinois State Federation of Labor assembled there in November, 1896, the country delegates completed their purging of the Federation and destroyed the last vestige of Pomeroy's influence. Riefler appointed a husky Credentials Committee of seven members which scrutinized the Chicago delegates and refused to admit any whose connections seemed suspicious.[3] "M. H. Madden who claims to represent Typographia No. 9

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] William C. Pomeroy, interview. Pomeroy showed the writer a syndicated page from the *Burlington* (Iowa) *Hawkeye* of January 24, 1897, containing the portraits of the ten speakers who formed the "Flying Wedge." They were: Richard Powers (president), M. H. Madden, William C. Pomeroy (general organizer), George W. Geary, James A. O'Connell, P. J. Miniter, A. P. Russell, M. R. Grady, Paul J. Maas, Patrick Enright, and J. W. Maxwell. Their motto was "A good dollar and the chance to earn it."

[3] Riefler, interview.

(German), and Frank Kidd, who has credentials from Bohemian Union No. 330," were "requested to furnish proof of their membership in the organizations they represent," and were refused seats in the convention.[1] Pomeroy presented his credentials, but after a sitting of the committee asked to be allowed to withdraw them, "which request was granted."[2] The same privilege was extended to a delegate from Federal Labor Union No. 6752, of Chicago. Two delegates from Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union No. 40, Pomeroy's union, were admitted, though there was some opposition.[3]

Then the convention adopted an amendment to the constitution offered by J. B. Lennon,[4] of Bloomington, as follows:

> All local and central bodies shall be represented by active members, and no organization shall be represented by proxy; provided, that wherever objection is raised to any delegate who is not actively engaged at his trade, such delegate shall not be seated except by a two-thirds vote.[5]

Thus the Federation hoped to preserve itself in the future from pseudo-laborites more interested in their personal fortunes or political interests than in the welfare of organized labor. Two years later a new amendment to the constitution provided that henceforth politicians and political officeholders should be ineligible for election as officers of the State Federation of Labor.[6]

[1] *Proc.* (1896), p. 2.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 5.

[4] Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor for many years.

[5] Constitution of Illinois State Federation of Labor, in *Proc.* (1896), p. 11.

[6] The leaders in the housecleaning movement which eliminated Pomeroy, as we have seen, were many of them state appointees of Governor Altgeld. Though these men had done good work, delegates began to feel that a state labor organization should not be dominated by officeholders of any party. Hence, Millard Lloyd, of Bloomington, proposed in 1896 that at the expiration of the terms of the present

The Illinois State Federation carried its prosecution of William C. Pomeroy to the American Federation of Labor, alleging that he still owed the organization $388 for *Labor Gazette* privileges. When the American Federation of Labor convention met at Cincinnati formal charges were filed against him, signed by Riefler and Bush. There were other charges—that he had used his position as general organizer for the American Federation of Labor to secure political boodle from Mark Hanna, and that he had prepared a circular during the recent campaign in which it was made to appear that the Federation had not indorsed free silver.[1] On the floor of the convention his credentials were rejected by a vote of 1,976 to 196.[2]

This period in the history of the Illinois State Federation came to an end with Pomeroy a discredited man. "When I left office in '97," Riefler says, "he was clear out of the labor

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officers all persons holding elective or appointive positions, national, state or municipal, should be ineligible to sit as delegates or to hold office in the Federation. No action was taken by the 1896 convention. The next year, however, President Riefler, who had been twice re-elected since 1894 with the accompaniment of resolutions praising his administration as "efficient, honorable, and dignified," announced that he would not be a candidate for another term. Then the constitutional rule mentioned in the text was adopted.—*Proc.* (1896), p. 7; *Eight-Hour Herald*, September 23, 1897.

[1] *American Federation of Labor Proceedings* (1896), pp. 38–41; clippings in Morgan files; *Illinois State Federation of Labor Proceedings* (1896), p. 14.

[2] *Ibid.* Some delegates explained their votes. Several objected to Pomeroy's personal character. Allusion was made to "purging the movement" of dishonest men and politicians who would use the Federation to advance their own ends.

A particular incident involving Pomeroy's character had been widely circulated among the delegates prior to the convention by a group of labor men who had "decided that they were tired of this man Pomeroy and that they would get him out of the movement." The result was that "when Pomeroy got to Cincinnati he didn't know what had happened. He would walk up to a bunch of men in the hotel lobby and they would all turn their backs on him." This matter seems to have had as much to do with his rejection as anything else, though everything brought against him "added to the heap."—Interview with George Schilling; corroborated by Riefler.

movement. He had been rejected by the American Federation of Labor, the State Federation, and the Chicago Federation."[1]

Thus ends the story of Pomeroy's rise and fall. It has been told in detail, not because Pomeroy was in any wise representative of the vast majority of Illinois trade unionists of the nineties, but for the opposite reason that his activities reveal the tremendous difficulties which beset those earnest and honest men who worked to build up the labor movement. Pomeroy's ventures were never sanctioned by the great body of trade-union men and women of his time; least of all are they to be taken as in any way representative of the Illinois State Federation of Labor of today. In the early stages of the Federation's development its conventions were small and poorly organized; under such circumstances it was possible for a group of self-seeking freebooters or political manipulators to "capture" the Federation machinery and to use the Federation's name. It must be emphasized, however, to the credit of the trade unionists of the nineties, that it did not take them long to send in more delegates and to expel the invaders who were misrepresenting the movement.

Pomeroy's domination was an exciting episode in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, but it was only an episode. The real, solid work of the Federation, representing the aspirations of sincere trade unionists, went on. To some of these more prosaic but more lasting phases of the Federation's activities—its fight against contract convict labor, for factory inspection, for child-labor laws, for better schools—we now turn.

[1] An American Federation of Labor committee took charge and reorganized the Chicago central body in 1896. It took a new name—Chicago Federation of Labor—by which it is still known. Pomeroy and his cohorts were excluded from the start by constitutional provisions similar to those inserted in the Illinois State Federation of Labor constitution in 1896.—Charles Dold, interview.

CHAPTER VIII

PLATFORMS AND LEGISLATIVE METHODS, 1884–97

The Illinois State Labor Convention of 1884 and subsequent conventions embodied in a formal "platform" those legislative demands which were considered most important. The platform did not remain fixed, but was redrafted or amended each year. Nevertheless, it retained the same general characteristics and treated of nearly the same subjects until 1893. The table on pages 142–145 shows the topics upon which platform planks were adopted during this period and summarizes for each topic the stand taken by each convention.

From whence came these demands which comprised the first legislative objectives of the State Federation of Labor? A comparison of them with the earlier principles of other Illinois labor organizations and with contemporary platforms of the national Federation of Trades and the Knights of Labor shows that they were not at all unique; they expressed what had been on the minds of workingmen in Illinois and elsewhere for some time. All of the legislative aims of the Chicago Trade Council of 1877 and all but two of the eight legislative requests of the Chicago central body in 1879, for example, are included in the platform of 1884. There are only four subjects treated in the national Federation of Trades platform of 1884 which are not found also, and in much the same spirit, among the Illinois demands. Of these, the letting of government work by contract was taken up in the Illinois platform of 1887; the enactment of lien laws for workingmen and the establishment of bureaus of labor

statistics were not issues in Illinois, while the prohibition of foreign contract labor immigration was essentially a national subject. On the vital issues of convict labor, eight hours, wage payment in truck, employers' liability, apprenticeship, child labor, compulsory education, conspiracy laws, sanitary and safety measures, and the incorporation of trade unions, the Federation of Trades (later the American Federation of Labor) and the Illinois state organization were in close agreement. The Illinois planks which do not have parallels in the Federation of Trades platform, namely, those relating to state boards of arbitration, gambling in food products, abolition of land monopoly by non-resident holders, government control of transportation and communication, and the relief of taxpayers on mortgaged real estate, show the Knights of Labor, Henry George, Socialist, and agrarian influences in the movement.

In 1894 the Illinois State Federation of Labor did not adopt a platform of its own, but indorsed instead the proposed political program of the American Federation of Labor as enlarged and modified by the Springfield political conference of that year. Then the single-tax influence became dominant, and the entire platform in 1895 and 1896 revolved about the "land question" and taxation. The preamble was a single-tax argument, leading up to three demands: (1) abolition of land monopoly by means of a single tax on land values; (2) a constitutional convention in Illinois to reconstruct the fundamental law so that tax reforms and other reforms might be made effective; and (3) local option in taxation.[1] In 1897 the first and third of these were retained, and several important planks not connected with taxation were adopted, including government ownership of railroads, telegraphs, and telephones, with municipal ownership of other public utilities; abolition of government by injunction;

[1] *Peoria Herald*, October 12, 1895; *Proc.* (1896), p. 10.

PLATFORM PLANKS OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR, 1884–93*

Convict Labor:

1884–86 "The total abolition of the contract convict labor system."

1887–93 Not in platform.

Arbitration:

1884 Establishment of boards of arbitration to settle disputes.

1885 Add: "said boards to settle all disputes .... decision to be final. . . . ."

1886 Not in platform.

1887 Similar to 1884.

1888 Substitute: Law providing for appointment of Arbitration board in each dispute, selected three by employers, three by workers, three agreed.

1890–93 Not in platform.

Hours:

1884 Enactment and enforcement of eight hour legal day, exempting agricultural pursuits.

1885 Enforcement of present law (enacted in sixties), with penalty for violation.

1886 Substitute: "The shortening of hours of labor."

1887–88 Same as 1885.

1890–93 Add: Obligatory upon district attorney to prosecute.

Employers' Liability:

1884 Law to fix liability of employer for damages in case of injury to worker.

1885 Similar.

1886–93 Not in platform.

*Sources from which the annual platforms were obtained: 1884, 1887, 1890 (Jacksonville), and 1893: Official Proceedings; 1885: *Illinois State Register*, February 14, 1885; 1886: *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886; 1888: *Peoria Journal*, January 13, 1888; 1892: *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1893), p. 161–62.

The platforms adopted in 1889, 1890 (November convention, at Quincy), and 1891 are unavailable.

Apprenticeship:

1884–88 "The enactment of an efficient apprenticeship law."

1890–93 Not in platform.

Child Labor:

1884 Prohibition of, under 14, in workshops and factories, except as applied to industrial schools.

1885–86 Not in platform.

1887–93 Prohibition of child labor under 14 in any branch of industry.

1888 Add: Obligatory upon district attorney to prosecute.

Education:

1884 Adoption and enforcement of compulsory educational system.

1885 Substitute: Enforcement of compulsory education law, penalty for violation. Free school books.

1886 Similar.

1887 Substitute: Election of school boards by people. Boards to enforce attendance. Free school books.

1888 Add: That science of government be taught.

1890–93 Substitute: Free school books, publication not to be in penal institution but in union shops.

1892–93 Add: Maintenance in its integrity of present public school system, with increasing efficiency.

Safety:

1884 More rigid enforcement of mining laws; enactment of penalties.

1885 Substitute: Better laws for protection of miners and railway men.

1886–88 Similar to 1884 and 1885.

1890–93 Substitute: Enactment of laws for better protection of all wage workers.

Trade Unions, Conspiracy, etc.:

1884–87 Abolition of LaSalle Black Law, and enactment of law making ironclad contracts illegal.

1888–93 Abolition of LaSalle Black Law, Cole Anti-Boycott Law, Merritt Conspiracy Law, and all other laws of like nature.

1893 Add: Make it misdemeanor to discharge employee for belonging to labor organization.

Taxes on Mortgaged Real Estate:

1884 Give proportionate lien against holders of mortgages for taxes paid.

1885–93 Not in platform.

Wage Payment:

1884–85 Weekly payment; abolition of the truck system.

1886 Substitute: Abolition of the truck system.

1887–90 Similar to 1884–85.

1892–93 Not in platform.

Land Monopoly:

1884 Abolition of land monopoly by non-resident holders.

1885 Substitute: Enactment of laws prohibiting non-residents holding land.

1886–93 Not in platform.

Gambling in Necessities:

1884–85 Make it criminal offense to gamble or create corners in necessities.

1886 Not in platform.

1887 Enactment of law prohibiting all kinds of gambling.

1888–93 Not in platform.

Incorporation of Labor Organizations and Co-operatives:

1884 Legal right of labor organizations, as such, to hold property and conduct co-operative business.

1885 Law providing for protection of co-operative associations as distinguished from those governing joint stock companies.

1886 Not in platform.

1887–93 Same as 1885.

Public Utilities:

1884 More complete control of railways and waterways of state in interests of people.

1885 Substitute: Laws whereby railways and waterways shall be controlled by the general government.

1886 Not in platform.

1887–88 Substitute: That the government own and control all means of transportation and communication by land.
1890 Substitute: The government to "control and keep within proper bounds. . . . . "
1892–93 Substitute: The government to "own and control" all means of transportation and communication. Municipal ownership of local utilities.

Sanitary Inspection—Factories, Tenements, Food:
1884 Appointment of inspectors of workshops and habitations, of food, drink, drugs, etc.
1885 Similar, plus demand for rigid measure to protect against adulterated food and drugs, with penalty.
1886 Substitute: State law for inspection of workshops, factories, tenements, and dwellings.
1887–93 Same as 1885.

State Printing Office:
1884 Not in platform.
1885 Enactment of law establishing state printing office for printing all school books and material for state institutions.
1886 Not in platform.
1887–88 Similar.
1890–93 Not in platform.

Contract System:
1884–86 Not in platform.
1887–88 "An amendment to the Constitution abolishing the contract system."
1890–93 Not in platform.

Australian Ballot:
1884–88 Not in platform.
1890 "The early adoption of the Australian system of voting."
1892–93 Not in platform.

Public Charitable Institutions:
1884–90 Not in platform.
1892–93 Removal from political control; to be managed on plan similar to that in use for public schools.

Enforcement of Law:
1884–90 Not in platform.
1892–93 "The strict enforcement of all laws."

restriction of immigration for a period of at least twenty years; the initiative and referendum; free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1; and employers' liability.[1]

The methods employed by the Federation of the eighties and nineties for the attainment of these legislative objectives were comparatively crude and sporadic. In 1884 it approached the old parties in state convention with a long list of proposed reforms, and then worked for the Democratic ticket as a whole because the Democrats indorsed its program. Later it went to the old-party conventions again, but this time with only one demand—support of the contract convict labor amendment. The Democratic and Republican organizations were bargained with as units; there was little provision for discrimination between individual legislative candidates. To be sure, the 1884 convention recommended that wage-workers refuse to vote for the re-election of any man who had opposed a bill presented in the interest of labor; but it neglected to suggest any way by which the voter might know what bills had been presented in the interest of labor and who had opposed them. Throughout this period there was no continuous and organized effort to make known the records of candidates for re-election.

Independent political action was the legislative method of the Federation late in the eighties and again in the nineties, but the Labor party movements have already been described in detail and they need not be re-discussed here. The meagerness of the Federation's funds was a serious handicap to its lobbying efforts. It was impossible to support agents at the capital during sessions of the General Assembly, so the Legislative Committee generally had to be made up of Springfield delegates. In 1889 another expedient was announced: "Hereafter the plan of this organization will be

[1] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

to send a bill to one representative in the legislature, and all persons having anything on that subject will send it to this man, who will be held responsible for the passage of the bill."[1] During the early nineties, says John C. Harding, "we sent letters to every member of the legislature, as well as to our representatives in Congress. We had no money, and couldn't send committees down to lobby."[2] When the Federation was working for the repeal of the Merritt Conspiracy Law the Legislative Committee arranged that circulars would be drawn up and sent to all affiliated organizations, where they would be signed by the members. Then they would be presented to the legislators.[3]

The annual conventions themselves were part of the method for forwarding the legislative program, and we may even say that in the early days they were the chief part. The conventions not only decided what organized labor should demand; they were a means of publicity for those demands. "There is nothing secret about the meetings," said the *Decatur Review* in 1886; "in fact, the labor delegates wish the public to fully understand the principles they advocate." The proceedings of nearly every convention were printed and given as wide a circulation as possible. In 1890 each delegate was made a committee of one to present the minutes of the convention to his home newspapers for publication. Twice the convention was held in Springfield in order that the delegates might call on the governor and the legislators in the interests of labor legislation.

In the nineties, after the Labor party flurries had passed, the Federation found itself in possession of a more substantial membership and larger funds than before; so it was able to increase its lobbying activities. Federation officers kept a

[1] *Bloomington Pantagraph*, January 9, 1889.

[2] Interview.

[3] *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890.

fairly close watch on bills favorable or unfavorable to labor in Springfield, and they submitted reports more comprehensive and specific than had been made in previous years. Secretary Groves wrote in 1895,

> Some twenty-seven bills were at one time in the hands of President Riefler and myself. The most important bills that failed of passage in the regular session were the bills relating to convict labor, arbitration, child labor, blacklist, House Bill No. 521, which provided for a system of parole of prisoners; No. 147, an act to protect employes and laborers in their claim for wages. . . . .

"Bills opposed during the session were House Bill No. 205, which was an act defining secret societies," and others. This same report makes particular mention of the chief friends and enemies of labor legislation in the preceding session, including details of the attitudes of various legislators in committee work.[1]

President Riefler and Secretary Bush worked out a system for keeping the local unions and labor papers of the state in touch with the legislative situation through printed circulars. These were issued once a quarter, or oftener upon occasion. Another device employed during the nineties was the official organ, a labor paper designated by the convention for the publication of all official reports and announcements during the year. President Riefler also urged each affiliated body to form a legislative committee, and these committees were asked to circulate petitions for presentation to the legislature.[2]

A rightful criticism several times leveled at the legislative methods of the State Federation of Labor in its early years was that it had not yet learned to concentrate upon a few subjects at a time. "It is astonishing," said the editor of the *Illinois State Journal*, ". . . . the extent of their

[1] *Peoria Herald*, October 9, 1895.

[2] See *Eight-Hour Herald*, December 29, 1896, February 2, 1897.

calls for legislation. They have already laid out work enough to engage the attention of our State and National legislatures for years, provided it be finally done in a statesmanlike way." And while the more friendly *Register* reproved its rival for this sentiment, commenting that "had [the delegates] been railroad presidents or representatives of monopolistic corporations, the *Journal* would have piped another tune," it felt called upon to offer the same sort of advice itself two years later.

> If the State Labor Association people were wise they would deal with one, two or three questions that are of especial interest and importance to the laboring classes, but instead of doing this they manifest a disposition to take charge of the affairs of the country generally, and so "scatter" as to fritter away a strength that might make itself felt if concentrated.[1]

The officers of the Federation began to act on this advice in the nineties. "We agreed," says Riefler, "that we shouldn't undertake too many things in the legislature."[2]

[1] *Illinois State Register*, February 14, 1885, and January 28, 1887.

[2] Interview.

CHAPTER IX

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY, 1884–97

The following summary of the attitudes taken by Illinois labor conventions from 1884 to 1897 upon legislative topics is arranged according to the scheme of classification outlined in the Introduction and used throughout this book.

I

A. THE WORKDAY AND WORK WEEK

"Enactment and enforcement" of an eight-hour legal day was the third plank in the Seamen's Hall platform of 1884, and this demand continued down to the middle nineties. What the labor convention meant by "enforcement" was made plain in subsequent platforms. It wanted "an efficient eight hour law," one that would not only make eight hours a "legal" workday—as did the futile statute of 1867—but would also make a workday longer than eight hours illegal and cause for penalty.[1]

The hope for eight hours by law played a large part in the independent political movements which followed the events of 1886, and an eight-hour plank occupied first place in the industrial section of the Springfield political program as late as 1894.[2] As economic action became increasingly important, however, the agitation for legal regulation of the workday faded. A resolution adopted at Jacksonville in 1890 proclaimed that "eight hours is a legal day's work," but it significantly emphasized "enforcement" by the unions themselves. The rapid strengthening of trade-union organization transferred the "eight-hour question" from the political

[1] See platform tabulation, chap. viii.

[2] See chaps. iv and vi.

convention to the picket line, where it has remained since. In the last years of this period requests by the Federation for legislative regulation of the workday were confined wholly to the employment of women and children or to the special case of government work.

The Seamen's Hall Convention favored the idea of a Saturday half-holiday, after some discussion as to whether or not this contradicted the eight-hour demand. The understanding was that the half-holiday was something which should rest with each employer, while the eight-hour day should be enforced by law.[1]

The Federation declared itself in favor of a Sunday closing law in 1888, and in 1894 helped the retail clerks secure a Sunday closing ordinance in Chicago.[2] But when the Supreme Court of Illinois in 1896 held unconstitutional a Sunday closing law applicable only to barber shops, the Federation refused to adopt a resolution that all places of business conducted for private gain should be closed on Sunday, holding that "it is inexpedient to legislate upon this question."[3]

B. PAYMENT OF WAGES

State labor conventions from the first demanded laws to require weekly payment of wages and abolition of the truck system. The Thirty-Seventh General Assembly in 1891 passed a measure on each of these subjects, and at the Alton convention President John C. Harding reported these and other successes with pride. They were "largely owing to the pressure brought to bear on members of the Legislature

[1] *Chicago Daily News*, March 28, 1884.

[2] "Proceedings," 1894, *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 133.

[3] *Eight-Hour Herald*, May 21, 1896; *Proc.* (1896), p. 10. "The barbers themselves were always very much divided as to whether the law was or was not one that if enforced would redound to their benefit," says the *Eight-Hour Herald*.

by the Federation of Labor, in common with other industrial organizations of the state."[1]

The Federation several times instructed its Legislative Committee to push bills providing for checkweighmen at the mouths of coal mines,[2] and to regulate the screening of coal in its effect upon wages. Improvements were made in the law on these subjects during the eighties, but effective regulation did not come for another decade.[3]

A bill to "secure to the mechanics and laborers the first lien on all work, for the full amount due for labor performed on such work" was favored in 1886 and 1887; in the latter year the legislature adopted a less satisfactory substitute.[4]

When in 1895 the Butchers and Grocers' Association of Chicago began to push a bill to strengthen the Garnishee Law, the State Federation of Labor, complaining that the existing law was already too stringent, opposed unsuccessfully any further enactment.[5]

C. HEALTH, SAFETY, COMFORT

Included in practically all its annual platforms were planks in which the Illinois State Federation demanded "the enactment of laws for the better protection of all wage-workers in mines, factories, workshops and on all railways," and inspection "by persons thoroughly competent and skilled in the branches of industry they inspect, of all workshops, factories, tenement houses and dwellings, to insure

[1] *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886; "Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly Minutes," March 7, 1889; *Official Call*, Ninth Annual Convention, Illinois State Federation of Labor, 1891, (document in possession of John C. Harding).

[2] *Illinois State Register*, February 13, 1885; *Proc.* (1896), p. 9.

[3] Beckner, *History of Illinois Labor Legislation*, pp. 113 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[5] *Peoria Herald*, October 10, 1895; *Proc.* (1896), pp. 4, 9; *Eight-Hour Herald*, June 8, 1897; "President's Address," 1897.

their good sanitary condition." In 1886 the Executive Committee was instructed to "use all available funds to secure legal talent" for perfecting a bill along these lines, and in 1889 an Employment Inspection Act comprising forty sections was brought to the State Federation by the Quincy central body and discussed point by point.[1] These demands were supplemented now and then by resolutions relating to specific trades or particular measures for relief. Mine regulations, to provide for proper ventilation and safety standards, received attention. In 1890 the Federation declared that there ought to be a requirement of law for factory doors to open outward.[2]

Some progress was made soon after the election of Governor Altgeld. The Sweatshop Act of 1893 provided for the first system of factory inspection in Illinois. The legislature of 1897 passed a Fire Escape Law, which was first attacked in the courts by the Chicago Manufacturers' Association and then repealed in 1899. It also adopted an act to protect the health of metal polishers.[3]

D. ACCIDENT COMPENSATION—EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY

Legislation "to fix the liability of employers for damages for loss of life or limb to the employe" was one of the original demands at the founding of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and the same demand was being made at the end of this period.[4] The Seamen's Hall Convention uttered a protest against judicial exposition of the fellow-servant doctrine. In 1885 some delegates argued that members of a corporation should be held criminally liable for injuries to employees due

[1] *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886; *Bloomington Pantagraph*, January 10, 1889.

[2] *Quincy Whig*, November 21, 1890.

[3] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 182–83; *Chicago Dispatch*, quoted in *Chicago Federationist*, March 9, 1898.

[4] See platforms tabulated in chap. viii.

to the company's negligence, though the prevailing opinion was that the liability should only be financial.[1] The convention of 1896 instructed its legislative agents to frame a statute which would award judgments to injured employees "upon positive proof of contributory negligence upon the part of owners, contractors, employers, foremen or managers."[2] The building trades were showing the most interest in the subject; acting upon this resolution the Building Trades Council of Cook County prepared a bill and had it introduced in the legislature.[3] It did not become law.

E. CHILD LABOR

"The prohibition of the employment, in any branch of industry, of children under the age of fourteen years for wages or hire," was one of the chief aims of the Illinois State Federation of Labor from the first.[4] Child labor was mentioned in the opening address at the Seamen's Hall Convention, and child-labor provisions were embodied in the plan for state factory inspection adopted in 1888.[5] The motives behind this particular demand were at once humanitarian and self-protective. A child-labor law and compulsory education were sought in order to benefit the children and to elevate the position of the working classes; at the same time, such legislation was needed in order to remove the undercutting effects of juvenile labor on wages.

The legislature of 1891 enacted a law forbidding the employment of children under thirteen in "stores, shops, factories, and manufacturing establishments," but "in default of any particular department or official charged with

[1] *Illinois State Register*, February 13, 1885; *Peoria Journal*, January 12, 1888.

[2] *Proc.* (1896), p. 9.

[3] *Eight-Hour Herald*, March 9, 1897.

[4] See platform tabulation, chap. viii.

[5] *Peoria Journal*, January 12, 13, 1888.

the duty of enforcing it, this law was never really operative."[1] The State Federation of Labor demanded better enforcement.[2]

"The first important child labor law and one which really marked the introduction of a new era in labor legislation" was approved June 17, 1893.[3] Its passage at this time was due largely to the efforts of Mrs. Florence Kelley, then connected with Hull-House in Chicago, but it is doubtful if the result would have been achieved without the energetic co-operation of Governor Altgeld.[4] The 1893 convention could rightfully refer with pride to the new Child Labor Law as "enacted through the exertions of the Illinois Federation of Labor and other bodies of organized laborers," not only because of its continuous agitation in the past, but because the law was one more concrete justification of the Federation's part in helping to bring forward and to elect John P. Altgeld.

Agitation and co-operation with socially minded groups in the state for the further improvement of the Child Labor Law were continued, for many organized workers felt that "child labor ranks next in importance to organization and the short hour movement in the economic struggle." Workingmen were incensed to find able-bodied men in the parks, where children should be, while children entered the factory gates.[5] The Act of 1893 was extended in 1897 to cover nearly all employments entered into by children, and reductions

[1] Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 189.

[2] *Alton Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891.

[3] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 178.

[4] Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 191.

[5] *Cigarmakers' Journal*, quoted in *Eight-Hour Herald*, March 30, 1897. The State Federation adopted a resolution on the subject presented by the Cigarmakers' Union which probably expressed similar sentiments.—*Bloomington Bulletin*, September 16, 1897.

were made in their permissible hours of labor.[1] Regulation of child labor may be listed as one of the important goals on the State Federation's program which was attained in the nineties.

F. WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

In 1884 at the instance of Richard Griffiths, a prominent Knight, the State Labor Convention resolved "that we recommend equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex."[2] The Workshop and Factory Act passed in the nineties limited the hours of employment for women to eight a day, and the State Federation of Labor declared itself opposed to the efforts of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, newly formed to resist that provision.[3] The Federation manifested considerable interest in the ensuing contest before the Illinois Supreme Court, but did nothing to defend the law, which was finally declared unconstitutional.[4]

G. EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT

The special Committee on Out-of-Work appointed in the 1893 convention reported in favor of persistent agitation for the erection of public buildings and the making of public improvements, to be carried out at not less than union rates of wages and under the eight-hour system. Reduction of hours was also suggested as one means of lessening unemployment due to labor-saving machinery.[5]

[1] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 179.

[2] *Proc.* (1884).

[3] *Proc.* (1893), p. 33.

[4] "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 131; Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 267; *Ritchie v. People*, 115 Ill. 98.

[5] *Proc.* (1893), pp. 18, 41; "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 147.

K. PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

On the ground that it gave too much power to chiefs of fire departments, the 1887 convention protested against the passage of a firemen's pension bill in the form then before the legislature.[1]

II

A. CRAFT PROTECTION

"The enactment of an efficient apprenticeship law" was a plank in the platform during the eighties, and in 1893 the secretary of the Federation was instructed to correspond with affiliated organizations "calling their attention to the laxity of the apprenticeship laws, and also asking their co-operation to amend same and take steps to improve by education the personnel of trades unions."[2] But apprenticeship never appears to have been a prominent issue.

Several times the state organization backed various crafts in their demands for special legislation to protect them from competition. The printers were supported in their fight against an international copyright bill in 1884. Two years later they wanted indorsement of their view that the making of books should be done by American workmen, but this provoked a quarrel with certain free-trade delegates, led by George Schilling of the coopers. The coopers were not averse to a little "protection" for their own craft, however, as shown by their bill to regulate the use of second-hand flour barrels, tierces, and butter tubs, which Mr. Muldoon got the same convention to indorse.[3]

[1] *Illinois State Register*, January 28, 1887.

[2] *Proc.* (1893), pp. 18, 42.

[3] *Chicago Times*, June 3, 1886; *Decatur Review*, same date.

B. CONVICT LABOR

Earlier chapters (see chaps. i, ii, and vi) have told the story of the State Federation's campaign against contract convict labor and its part in the election of Governor Altgeld. Altgeld saw to it that the contract system was entirely abolished and that the number of prisoners engaged in any one line of work was kept as small as possible in order to reduce competition with "free" labor to a minimum.[1] But the abolition of the contract system and a degree of diversification did not remove the competition of cheap prison products. The Federation continued to wrestle with the problem.

Committees in 1894 and 1895 presented long reports.[2] President Riefler said in 1896 that the governor had done as much to limit the competition of prison labor as his power would permit; enabling legislation was necessary for any further steps. He reminded the delegates, some of whom were clamoring for removal of the particular sort of work done by their trade from the penitentiary, that "the elimination of one article from the prison catalogue will serve no useful purpose."[3]

[1] Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 183; interview, George Schilling.

[2] "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 149; *Peoria Herald*, October 12, 1895; also *Proc.* (1893), p. 37.

[3] *Proc.* (1896), p. 4. "For all his friendliness toward organized labor," says Altgeld's biographer, the Governor " . . . . incurred the rancorous hatred of many trade-unionists by his veto, in 1895, of a bill forbidding the manufacture of cigars in the prisons of the State. The veto message was an unanswerable argument for the continuance of cigar manufacture in Illinois prisons, under the law requiring the State to provide employment for convicts. The cessation of this industry would simply mean, as the message pointed out, the imposing of an additional burden upon other trades that had an equal right to protest against the competition of prison labor. As a matter of fact, the cigarmakers' union already had less to complain of than any other; for the hands employed at cigar-making within prison walls were considerably fewer than those engaged in any other industry. But the bill was passed over the veto."—Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 184. The State

Shortly afterward, the State Federation of Labor called a conference of manufacturers and workingmen in the trades affected by convict-labor competition. A committee was appointed to draft a bill, which was approved by a second conference.[1] It provided that the labor of convicts should not be let out by contract, and that the prisoners should, in so far as possible, manufacture supplies needed by the state. Convicts might also be used by the state for the building of highways and other public improvements which would not be undertaken otherwise. Thus agreed upon by labor and manufacturers in the interested industries, the proposed law was introduced and vigorously pressed in the Fortieth General Assembly.[2] But it was buried in the House.[3]

This period in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor closed with the convict-labor problem still unsolved, though the main objective which had brought about the Federation's organization—"the total abolition of the contract convict labor system"—had been attained, for the time being at least.

C. IMMIGRATION AND ALIEN LABOR

In 1884 the Seamen's Hall convention expressed itself as opposed to "further importation of pauper labor from

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Federation supported Governor Altgeld's position in the matter. (See "Proceedings," 1894, in *Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 149, where a resolution against cigar manufacturing in prison was tabled, and the Convict Labor Committee's indorsement of Riefler's statement in *Proc.* (1896), p. 12). The arguments used by the Cigarmakers stressed the danger of infection from cigars sealed by the lips of diseased convicts, and this may explain why they were able to get their bill through in spite of the governor and without the support of the State Federation. Many of the legislators were smokers, and this argument appealed to them strongly.—Interview, Barney Cohen.

[1] *Proc.* (1896), p. 12; *Eight-Hour Herald*, December 22, 1896, and January 19, 1897.

[2] *Ibid.*, February 2, 1897.

[3] *President's Address* (1897), printed separately.

Europe," and the next year it was recommended that more stringent contract-labor laws be enacted.[1] The subject came up again in 1890, 1891, and 1897, when a plank was inserted in the platform. It was first reported as follows:

"The restriction of all unnecessary immigration for a period of at least twenty years."

The convention struck out the word "unnecessary."[2]

III

A. LEGAL STATUS OF TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR METHODS

The legislative committee recommended in 1886 that "a law incorporating the trade unions of the state" be secured, and a similar desire had been expressed two years before in the platform.[3] This demand for incorporation does not appear to have received as much stress in Illinois as other items on the legislative program, but it certainly was voiced, which is a curious and noteworthy fact in view of the attitude of most trade unions toward incorporation today.[4]

Partly in order to give an *ex post facto* coloring of legality to the conviction of the Haymarket anarchists on a murder charge, partly to provide for similar contingencies in the future, and, as trade unionists said, partly to use the anar-

[1] *Illinois State Register*, February 13, 1885; *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886.

[2] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

[3] *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886; see platform tabulation in chap. viii.

[4] The second plank in the platform of the national Federation of Trades at this time demanded the incorporation of trades and labor unions under laws to be enacted by state and national legislatures, "in order that the property of the laboring classes may have the same protection as the property of other classes."—*Proceedings, Federation of Organized Trades. . . .*, 1883, p. 3.

There was a feeling that if unions could obtain the official recognition of the state by incorporating under its laws, then employers would also have to recognize them. But as trade unions became better established and able to compel recognition by their own power they began to see dangers lurking in the corporate form—damage suits, particularly. Then the demand for incorporation was dropped, and employers' organizations have since carried on campaigns to require trade unions to incorporate, which they do not wish to do.

chist scare to deal a blow at labor organizations, the General Assembly of 1887 passed the Merritt Conspiracy Law. Under this statute persons who by speech or print might advise any unlawful course of action were to be held responsible for all the consequences, and if life were lost they were to be deemed guilty of murder, whether any connection between the advice given and the actual crime could be shown or not. The object, charged the *Knights of Labor*[1], "is to hold for murder every member of a labor organization, if in an attempt to secure remunerative wages a man is killed by anybody, whether a member of the union or a tool of the employer"; and from the time of its passage strenuous efforts were made by the State Federation to bring about its repeal. It was the principal subject of condemnation in the resolutions favoring independent political action in 1888.

The Merritt Conspiracy Law was actually repealed in 1891, and President John C. Harding reported this success to the convention as the most important of all the results favorable to labor which had been secured from the last session of the legislature. In addition to organized labor's protests, an important factor in bringing about the repeal of the Merritt Law was the concern of some of the newspapers of the state lest they become entangled in its meshes.[2]

[1] April 16, 1887.

[2] Interview, George Schilling. An editorial writer on the *Chicago Herald* told Schilling that the real, though not the ostensible, reason why his paper urged repeal of the law was fear that newspapers might be held liable for the actions of susceptible readers.

At the time of the law's enactment the *Knights of Labor* had pointed out such possibilities: "The bill will probably pass, and then the *Tribune* better look out how it advises people to put arsenic in the food given to tramps; the *Chicago Times* must be wary of its advice to throw hand grenades among workingmen seeking to secure [an] increase in wages, and the *New York Times* go slow with its advice to capitalists to provoke laboring men to overt acts against the law as the best way to crush a strike. Judging from the tone of these papers since 1877, if the Merritt bill does pass, most of the large dailies in Chicago will need unhung editors before many years."—April 16, 1887.

The same legislature of 1887 which passed the Merritt Conspiracy Law declared the action of the officers of any organization issuing "any circular or edict . . . . for the purpose of establishing a so-called boycott or black-list" to be illegal and punishable under the law of conspiracy by a fine of two thousand dollars or five years imprisonment or both. This statute, known as the Cole Anti-Boycott Law, was "perhaps more odious to organized labor men than even the Merritt Conspiracy bill."[1] It was joined with the long-standing protest against the LaSalle Black Law.[2] Both statutes still stand on the books in 1929. The courts have held primary boycotts to be legal in certain circumstances, in spite of the prohibitions in the statute, and the LaSalle Black Law is a dead letter.[3]

The legislative record of the eighties thus showed a distinct setback to labor on this important matter of the legality of its organizations and tactics. In 1889 and 1890 a substitute for the obnoxious parts of the criminal conspiracy code was the principal legislative topic before the State Federation conventions, and the proceedings of the latter year print in full a proposed act legalizing labor organizations.

A few years later we find the Federation demanding "that any corporation or firm or private individual who discharges from employment any employe for belonging to labor organizations shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor"—a remedy for the "iron-clad," later called "yellow-dog," contract which employers were instituting. Organized labor actually succeeded in getting such a bill through the legis-

[1] *Chicago Times*, January 30, 1888. The law tended to drive boycott proceedings underground. The *Times* refers to the actions of "the boycott boards, which of late have become very secret bodies."

[2] See platforms tabulated in chap. viii.

[3] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 37 ff.

lature in 1893, but the remedy was short-lived. The Illinois Supreme Court declared the act unconstitutional in 1900.[1]

In 1891 President John C. Harding was able to report the passage of another piece of legislation requested by the Federation at two previous conventions. This was a Trade Mark Law, which served to protect union labels against counterfeits and imitations.[2]

B. THE INJUNCTION IN LABOR DISPUTES

During the nineties a most important issue began to come to the fore. In some of the great strikes of this period, notably the American Railway Union Strike of 1894, emergency orders from the courts had played decisive parts in the struggle. Hence, in 1897 the Illinois State Federation of Labor demanded for the first time "abolition of government by injunction."[3]

C. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

One of the hopes of labor in the eighties was for compulsory arbitration. It was another phase of that faith in the power of legislation to lift burdens from the backs of the workers which characterized so many of the political demands of the period. Organized labor has since gained more confidence in its economic power and its attitude has changed on this question, as on the incorporation of trade unions and eight hours by law.

The second plank in the early platforms asked for the establishment of boards of arbitration "to settle all disputes . . . . their decision to be final in all cases"; and A. C. Cameron mentioned first among measures for the

[1] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–18; *Gillespie* v. *People*, 188 Ill. 176.

[2] *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891; *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890; Report of Delegates to Illinois State Federation of Labor Convention, "Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly Minutes," January 20, 1889.

[3] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

benefit of labor, "the important question of arbitration—of referring all disputes between employer and employe to a disinterested tribunal, whose decision shall be final and binding on both parties . . . ." The Legislative Committee was instructed to draft a compulsory arbitration bill for immediate presentation to the legislature.[1]

Representative Dixon's bill introduced in the next General Assembly was regarded as "one of the most important ever presented in the interest of labor."[2] It provided for a commission of five, representing capital and labor, to investigate complaints and to enforce its findings at least partially. "It gives this board about the same power to settle disputes that the present railroad and warehouse commissioners have to enforce their findings," said the *Knights of Labor*, which looked upon the measure as "too radical for us to hope it will ever become law," though the editor indorsed it heartily. Should the Governor appoint the right men to such a commission, he said, "it would be in their power to virtually settle the labor question in Illinois.[3] The bill was not enacted, and the labor question remained unsettled.

A significant change came over the attitude of the State Federation after about 1890. Little mention can be found in its platforms or resolutions of the once prominent demand for

[1] This attitude is so utterly different from that since adopted that Cameron's arguments deserve further quotation: "The substitution of reason for passion, justice for tyranny, arbitration for strikes and lockouts," he said, ". . . . must commend itself to the support of every right minded citizen. How these boards of arbitration shall be appointed, whether selected from the judiciary, or from those in the private walks of life, is of itself of comparatively little importance, for when a desire to accomplish these results is manifested, and the benefits sure to accrue to society by their adoption (are) recognized, the battle is half won."—*Illinois State Register*, February 12, 1885.

[2] Unidentified clipping, 1887, Morgan files.

[3] *Knights of Labor*, January 12, 1887.

enforced arbitration. Not only had the influence of the Knights of Labor philosophy given place to that of the American Federation of Labor, with its emphasis on organized economic power rather than legal enactment, but the relative strength of labor and capital in many trades was undergoing a transformation. In the eighties organized labor had felt itself at a disadvantage and had sought the interposition of the state to compel the employer to deal justly; in the nineties the skilled crafts of the American Federation of Labor, at least, had become confident that a greater advance was possible in the direction of strong organization, collective bargaining, and the trade agreement.

Representatives of the Illinois State Federation did cooperate in the passage of the bill which created a State Board of Arbitration in 1895,[1] but the Board was not given mandatory powers. To that the State Federation in the nineties would have been opposed.

D. REGULATION OF DISPUTES

In the serious labor disturbances of the middle eighties, employers resorted more and more often to the use of hired gunmen and detectives for protecting their property and for breaking strikes. The men composing these squads were not usually chosen for their trustworthiness and discretion with firearms; more often than not they were an irresponsible riffraff. The result was that clashes became frequent, bloodshed was not uncommon, and workingmen acquired the bitterest hatred for these private "armies."

State labor conventions repeatedly denounced "Pinkerton's movable mob." That of 1886 protested vigorously against the actions of railroad companies in bringing "cowboys from Texas and hired sluggers from Kentucky and

[1] Report of Secretary Groves, quoted in *Peoria Herald*, October 9, 1895.

Mississippi" into the state, swearing them in as deputy sheriffs contrary to law, and then hurrying them out of the state after they had fired upon and killed "defenseless citizens of St. Clair County without provocation."[1] The following year a resolution against the Pinkerton men denounced "the growing tendency on the part of incorporated wealth to rely on illegal and purchased force for the purpose of intimidating the people," and quoted Governor Oglesby's message to the legislature in which he had remarked that a portion of the people were inclined to demand the use of the militia without an effort to secure the protection of the law through the civil forms.[2] The Federation continued to demand the passage of an anti-Pinkerton law,[3] asked the Governor to forbid mayors from issuing warrants to private detective agencies or allowing them to make arrests,[4] complained that the police in certain parts of the state, especially Chicago, had usurped powers not belonging to them in industrial disputes,[5] and was inclined to oppose the establishment of a military post near Chicago on the ground that the military, like the police, would be used to put down strikes.[6]

IV

A. BALLOT REFORM

The conventions of 1889 and 1890 asked for an Australian Ballot Law, specifying five essential provisions.[7] "Our

[1] *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886.

[2] *Illinois State Register*, January 27, 1887.

[3] *Alton Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891.

[4] *Proc.* (1899), p. 11.

[5] *Bloomington Pantagraph*, January 10, 1889; *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890.

[6] *Illinois State Register*, January 28, 1887.

[7] "Report of Delegates to Illinois State Federation of Labor Convention," "Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly Minutes," January 20, 1889; *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890.

present system affords the worker no protection from the scrutiny and intimidation of his employer . . . . ." Senator Burke, one of the labor representatives at Springfield, was reported in 1889 to be introducing a bill for the adoption of the Australian plan of voting,[1] and in 1891 the legislature passed the Official Ballot Act.[2]

The Quincy convention of 1890 also declared in favor of a constitutional amendment for the direct election of United States senators.[3]

In 1885 a minority report of the Resolutions Committee, by Bert Stewart, had stated "that the wives and sisters of the members of the union should be entitled to suffrage," but it was tabled. George Neff said the question should not be brought up in the convention at all. Two years later Mrs. McLogan proposed a plank for the platform declaring in favor of "equal social and political rights of the sexes"; it was rejected. The next year, however, the Federation "favored the cause of female suffrage" and decided to forward a draft of a bill for that purpose to Senators Bell and Burke at Springfield. In 1891 it again went on record in favor of suffrage for women.[4]

B. INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM

After the "boodle legislature" of 1897 had adjourned and organized laboring men had vented their wrath over the franchise bills, they began to ask "What is the remedy?" and to suggest that the people must be able to express their will

[1] *Knights of Labor*, January 12, 1889.

[2] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 355.

[3] Circular to members of Congress, December 24, 1890. (Document in possession of John C. Harding.)

[4] *Illinois State Register*, February 13, 1885; *Proc.* (1887); *Peoria Journal*, January 12, 1888; *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891.

directly, without the intervention of corruptible legislators.[1] President Riefler said at Bloomington,

> We are both unable and unwilling to "grease" the pathway of legislative intricacies for our measures. I recommend that this Federation. . . awaken among the people a sentiment favorable to the application of the principle of the Initiative and Referendum in the State of Illinois. . . . . To this should be added the provision that when any law shall have been adopted by the people no court may set it aside.[2]

Delegates from the Chicago Federation came with instructions to the same effect,[3] and the convention, accordingly, embodied in its platform for the first time: "We favor the establishment of the initiative and referendum system of government."[4]

D. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

In 1886, 1887, and again in 1891 the State Federation requested the General Assembly to extend the powers and usefulness of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.[5]

E. THE COURTS

After the women's eight-hour section of the Workshop and Factory Act and various other labor laws had been set aside the Federation recommended a constitutional amendment "to make it possible to pass laws in the interest of the toilers that cannot be declared unconstitutional by any Supreme Court." It also urged that judges of the Supreme Court should be elected by popular vote.[6]

[1] *Eight-Hour Herald*, June 22, 1897.

[2] *President's Address* (1897), printed separately.

[3] *Eight-Hour Herald*, August 19, 1897.

[4] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

[5] *Decatur Review*, June 3, 1886; *Illinois State Register*, January 27, 1887; *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891.

[6] *Proc.* (1896), p. 14.

F. CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

In his inaugural address delivered in 1893 Governor Altgeld pointed out the need for constitutional revision, chiefly for reform of the provisions relating to revenue and the elective franchise, and a joint resolution proposing a constitutional convention passed the Senate but was defeated in the House.[1] Two years later the State Federation of Labor inserted a demand for a constitutional convention in its platform. It hoped to secure from such a convention both revenue reform and reform of the courts. President Riefler alluded to the monopoly of the right to use the earth, facilitated by bribery of legislators and control of court decisions, as a reason for remodeling the organic law.[2] No constitutional convention was held.

At its 1893 session, the legislature submitted to popular vote a proposed amendment that

> the General Assembly shall have power and it shall be its duty to enact and provide for the enforcement of all laws that it shall deem necessary to regulate and control contract conditions and relations existing or arising from time to time between corporations and their employees.[3]

Though no official action by the State Federation's convention is recorded on this proposition, its executive officers worked for the passage of the amendment,[4] which nevertheless failed of adoption.[5] The Illinois State Federation of

[1] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 191.

[2] *Peoria Herald*, October 9, 1895.

[3] Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 197.

[4] At a meeting of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly just before the election of 1895 "a telegram from President Riefler of the State Federation of Labor at Springfield advocating the support of organized labor at the polls Tuesday to the constitutional amendment empowering the legislature to enact and enforce laws to control the relations of corporations and employes was read and approved." —*Chicago Times*, November 5, 1894, Morgan Scrapbook.

[5] The amendment failed of passage "partly because of public indifference and partly because the legislative disposition to intermeddle with corporate affairs had

Labor today would heartily oppose any proposal for granting such broad powers to the legislature.[1]

V

A. EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

The organized labor movement has always been one of the most active groups in the community in support of popular education and the public schools. Since the seventies labor organizations in Illinois had lined up with the teachers of the state and others who proposed a compulsory education law;[2] the Seamen's Hall Convention made this demand part of its platform. Next year the State Labor Association was advocating the enforcement of the newly enacted statute on compulsory education and the addition of a penalty clause.[3]

Free textbooks and school supplies, to be furnished by the state, were urged with considerable emphasis throughout this period, beginning in 1885.[4] In 1897 a strong impetus was given to the textbook agitation at a meeting of the Illinois State Teachers' Association,[5] and the Federation instructed its Executive Board to urge the importance of the question upon local unions, particularly in connection with the nomi-

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hitherto redounded to the advantage of certain unscrupulous legislators more than to anyone else concerned."—Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 198. But the biggest reason for the defeat of this amendment, as of the other two submitted during the nineties, was "not due to any real opposition to them, but rather to the method of submitting them, combined with the constitutional requirement of a majority of all votes cast at the election."—*Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 199–200.

[1] Interview, Victor A. Olander.

[2] *Centennial History of Illinois*, IV, 35, 125, 440.

[3] *Illinois State Register*, February 14, 1885. This plank was dropped in 1889 when a new compulsory education law was enacted.

[4] See platform tabulation, chap. viii.

[5] *Eight-Hour Herald*, January 5, 1897.

nation of legislators.[1] Of course, the Federation of Labor did not approve the plan to print school books in state penal institutions. It wanted them published by "fair" private firms or in a state printing plant employing union labor.[2]

B. TAXATION

Taxation played little part in the deliberations of the state labor conventions of the eighties, but it received a great deal of attention in the middle nineties. There were several reasons for its prominence at this time.

The first is found in the fact that single-taxers, imbued with the doctrines of Henry George, were in control of the Federation. They saw in "land monopoly" the root of all the ills of which labor complained; hence, while they worked persistently for factory acts and employers' liability laws, they looked upon such measures of amelioration as only surface deep. Laboring men, they felt, could never be really free so long as private monopoly of the land, and therefore of the right to the produce of labor, should exist. A tax on land values (the single tax) was the means for doing away with land monopoly; hence, labor organizations were getting down to "fundamentals" when they moved to reform the tax system on lines suggested by Henry George.[3]

It is significant, too, that the concern with revenue reform inspired by the single-tax movement entered the Federation just following the panic of 1893, and that it lost its intensity with the return of prosperity toward the end of the decade. When men are out of work, wages low, and

[1] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

[2] *Quincy Whig*, November 20, 1890; *Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat*, November 11, 1891.

[3] Joseph W. Farris, chairman of the Legislative Committee of the Federation during Riefler's administration, laments that labor organizations of today do not consider "fundamental" questions. He remarks, correctly, that one must read *Progress and Poverty* to understand labor reform movements of the eighties and nineties.—Interview.

strikes unsuccessful, the influence of those who advocate fundamental changes in the social system has always been greatest in the labor movement.

But entirely aside from single-tax proclivities and economic discontent, there was reason enough why the State Federation should show concern over the revenue system of Illinois. This system was based upon a law of 1872, which carried out the provisions of the constitution of 1870, and the main source of income was the general property tax.[1] "Conceived in economic ignorance, brought forth in political ineptitude, and administered in corruption and inefficiency,"[2] the system was "a blot upon the fair page of Illinois History."[3] Many reform forces of the state, in addition to organized labor, protested against it; Governor Altgeld called it "in its practical workings, a giant of injustice," under which "the great concentrations of wealth contribute comparatively little, while the owners of small and moderate sized properties are forced to bear nearly all the burdens of the government."[4]

The matter first came up in the State Federation convention in 1894, when the single-taxers held the balance of power. A special committee on taxation advocated an amendment to the constitution of Illinois to provide for "local option" or "home rule" in taxation, with the hope that under such a plan various localities might be persuaded to try out the single-tax principle, which the Federation indorsed at the same session.[5]

[1] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 433.

[2] Browne, *Altgeld of Illinois*, p. 199.

[3] *Centennial History of Illinois*, V, 433.

[4] Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

[5] "Proceedings," 1894, in *Official Annual Labor Gazette* (1895), p. 135. C. J. Riefler says that his group had this proposed constitutional amendment drafted by a lawyer in order to have something definite with which to beat socialism.—Interview.

A few months after the adjournment of the State Federation's convention the *Eighth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, issued under the direction of George Schilling, made its appearance. It was devoted exclusively to the operation of the revenue system, and endeavored "to investigate and expose, in the interest of what is commonly distinguished as the laboring class, the liberty-destroying methods of taxation that prevail in Illinois."[1] It demonstrated by voluminous statistical data, taken chiefly from Cook County, the ridiculous undervaluation of personal property for purposes of taxation, the enormous undervaluation of real property, the discrimination in favor of big holdings, and the much greater undervaluation of real estate as compared with improvements which prevailed under the existing tax system. The order of favorable undervaluation was shown to be "(1) vacant land, (2) luxurious residences, (3) business premises in the commercial center of the city, (4) cheap residences."[2] All this operated to throw an undue portion of the tax burden upon the less wealthy, wage-earning classes and to encourage monopoly. This remarkable report recommended: (1) divorce of state from local taxation; (2) separation of improvement from site values in tax returns made by assessors; (3) boards of review; (4) maps and records of taxable property; (5) local option in taxation; and (6) site-value taxation in lieu of other forms for state purposes.[3]

[1] *Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics* (1894), p. 11. "It is safe to say that no official report of our time has caused so decided a sensation as that created by the *Eighth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of Illinois*. . . . [So] great was the demand for it that the first edition was quickly exhausted and another edition of 20,000 copies is in course of preparation."—*Eight-Hour Herald*, April 16, 1896.

[2] *Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics* (1894), p. 351.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 395–98. The report discussed the site-value tax favorably and at some length and pointed out that it had been recommended by its supporters as a

These recommendations and conclusions of the Bureau of Labor Statistics under George Schilling represented the attitude of the State Federation of Labor on the tax question. Nothing in the way of actual legislation came from the agitation for revenue reform. In fact, the single-tax leaders of the Federation who inspired it had little hope of immediate results; they looked upon it chiefly as propaganda, a means of educating people in the teachings set forth by Henry George.[1]

C. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Demands for more effective government regulation of public utilities were embodied in the platforms of nearly all the state labor conventions. Throughout the nineties the State Federation stood for government ownership of the means of transportation and communication, and municipal ownership of street railways, gas and electric plants, and waterworks. It protested vigorously against the Yerkes "Eternal Monopoly Bills" and the Humphrey Bills which were passed by the legislatures of 1895 and 1897 amid wholesale bribery.[2]

"solution of the labor question; or, more correctly, as the natural way of re-investing every laborer with power to settle his own labor question for himself." "The simple remedy is, by freeing business from monopoly and tax burdens, to open the way for unlimited opportunities for employment, so that none need take another's place in order to get remunerative work himself. This, it is claimed, the site value tax would do. Reversing present conditions in which men continually hunt for employment, so the argument runs, the site value tax would, by removing obstructions, cause employment to continually hunt for men."—*Ibid.*, p. 394.

[1] C. J. Riefler, interview.

[2] Governor Altgeld's biographer says that when the governor vetoed these bills in 1895 he spurned a half-million dollar bribe.—Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 241. For the attitude of the Federation see platform tabulations in chap. viii; also, *Proc.* (1893), p. 14; *Eight-Hour Herald*, April 6, to June 8, 1897, *passim*; *President's Address* (1897), printed separately.

D. MISCELLANEOUS LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The conventions of the eighties requested a more favorable law for the incorporation of co-operative societies, pure food laws, regulation of boards of trade to prevent gambling in the necessities of life, regulation of the coal trade to do away with pools and monopolies, a new law regarding the ejection of tenants from dwelling houses, regulation of suits in justice courts to protect laboring men against crooked "collectors," inspection of public buildings, improvements in the recording of titles to real estate, improvement of waterways, better street car service in Chicago, and many other measures in the interest of the working-class community.[1]

The State Federation of Labor supported Governor Altgeld in his crusade to remedy the abuses existing in the management of some of the state charitable institutions,[2] and in 1897 it indorsed the movement for establishing postal savings banks in the United States.[3]

The convention of 1896 was not held until after the momentous election of that year; so the federation played little part in the free-silver campaign. But when it did meet it indorsed "the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, as passed by the American Federation of Labor in Chicago in December, 1893, in Denver in December, 1894, and in New York in December, 1895." On roll call the yeas were 39, the nays 10.[4] A free-silver plank remained in the platform through 1898.

[1] Platform tabulation in chap. viii, and the sources cited throughout this chapter.

[2] Platform tabulations, chap. viii.

[3] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 15, 1897.

[4] *Proc.* (1896), p. 15.

PART II

THE PERIOD 1898–1913

THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR, 1898–1913

Convention	President Elected	No. Delegates at Convention	Income
1898, Decatur	Charles Dold	96	$ 327.
1899, Danville	R. E. McLean	106	?
1900, Kewanee	T. J. O'Brien	90	?
1901, Joliet	Adam Menche	123	1,126.
1902, East St. Louis	Adam Menche	231	1,626.
1903, Springfield	Barney Cohen	205	3,780.
1904, Aurora	Barney Cohen	191	3,206.
1905, Danville	Barney Cohen	203	2,069.
1906, Streator	Edwin R. Wright	179	2,494.
1907, Rockford	Edwin R. Wright	218	4,350.
1908, Peoria	Edwin R. Wright	291	5,475.
1909, Belleville	Edwin R. Wright	236	9,688.
1910, Rock Island	Edwin R. Wright	211	7,796.
1911, Springfield	Edwin R. Wright	330	11,422.
1912, Danville	Edwin R. Wright	345	11,502.
1913, Decatur	John H. Walker	592	?

CHAPTER X

GROWTH AND PURIFICATION

During the first twelve years of the twentieth century the Illinois State Federation of Labor became a power in the labor movement of the state. The table on the preceding page shows the remarkable growth which took place. At the beginning of the period 1898 to 1913 attendance at the annual conventions numbered less than 100; by its close nearly 600. In 1898 at Decatur there were delegates from 10 central bodies and from 41 local unions, representing 22 different national or international trade unions; in 1913 at Decatur there were delegates from 37 central bodies and from 350 locals, representing 40 different nationals or internationals.[1]

Along with the growth in membership there was an even more pronounced improvement in the financial condition of the Federation. All through its previous history the organization had been restricted in its legislative activities by lack of funds—"sinews of war," A. C. Cameron had called them. In 1897 President Riefler was congratulating the delegates on having attained a firm financial footing, since receipts had mounted to $400 or $500 a year and expenses were somewhat less. But within the next sixteen years the revenue of the Federation became more than $15,000 annually.

The explanation for this rapid growth is to be found in three factors, the first of which was the swift expansion of the American labor movement as a whole following the return of prosperity in 1898. "At no time in its history, not excepting

[1] "Report of Credentials Committee," *Proc.* (1898), pp. 2–3, *Proc.* (1913), pp. 66–67.

the throbbing year of 1886, did labor organization make such important gains as during the next five years."[1] The second factor was the increased interest and confidence in the Illinois State Federation which organized workingmen began to feel. This in turn was due to the purging of undesirable elements about the middle of the period and to the remarkable success of legislative efforts thereafter. The third factor was the complete affiliation of the coal-miners by action of their state organization.

The latter event took place in 1908, and was due primarily to the efforts of John H. Walker, then state president of the Illinois Mine Workers. At the State Federation Convention in Peoria that year it was announced that the miners, the strongest organized labor group in Illinois, were ready to join in a body provided the per capita tax was reduced from 1½ cents a month to 1 cent. To this proposition the State Federation agreed, and the result was a gain in affiliations of more than 300 new locals and an increase in annual receipts from $5,495 in 1908 to $9,688 in 1909. In 1912 it was stated that the miners paid slightly more than one-half of the per capita tax collected by the State Federation.[2]

Toward the close of this period the Illinois State Federation of Labor was able to boast itself "the largest State Federation in the world," and to announce each succeeding

[1] Commons and associates, *History of Labour in the United States*, II, 521.

[2] John H. Walker, *Proc.* (1912), p. 248. At the close of the secretary's fiscal year in 1909 the organizations affiliated with the Illinois State Federation of Labor were divided as follows:

Trades councils and central bodies	40
Local unions of United Mine Workers	334
Local unions other than United Mine Workers	157
	531

It was stated that 25 other central bodies and about 900 local unions, comprising about 50 per cent of the trade-union movement of the state, were not directly affiliated with the Federation, though they benefitted by many of its activities.—*Proc.* (1909), pp. 13, 101.

convention as "the largest and most important State Federation meeting ever held in the history of the American labor movement."[1]

In the matter of financial support, President Wright congratulated the 1912 convention that "few organizations can say as we do: Our funds are ample for the prosecuting of the work outlined for us to do. . . . . We have a substantial amount in the treasury as a reserve fund for legislative work during the coming year. Our reserve (more than $4,000) is larger than the entire receipts of most similar organizations."[2] Contrast this with the situation as late as 1906, when, in the words of Edwin R. Wright, "we had to wait until the printers, the cigarmakers, the miners, and a few other organizations that stood solidly behind the State Federation came to the convention, took the secretary into a corner and counted out a few dollars before we knew whether we were going to have enough to pay the president or not,"[3] and the improvement is apparent.

Probably the most important advance made by the Federation in its organizational equipment during this period was the employment of full-time salaried officers. This was important, for it kept the Federation actively in the field between conventions—thus approaching still more closely that "year-round" federation toward which the organization had developed ever since its inception. Likewise, it gave a more continuous and better informed leadership. In the later years of this period the executive officers of the Federation received adequate pay for their services, the jobs as president and secretary were good enough to attract and hold capable men, and much of the temptation for officers to

[1] Official call for the convention of 1911, *Proc.* (1911), p. 10; same for 1913, *Proc.* (1913), pp. 16, 27.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), p. 18.

[3] *Proc.* (1912), p. 249.

seek political preferment rather than the welfare of the Federation was removed.

In 1899, for the first time, the president of the Federation was voted a salary—$18 a week, for which he was to act as organizer.[1] But the Federation was not able to pay that much, and next year it had to forego the luxury of an organizer and reduce the president's compensation to $100 a year. The salary of the secretary at the same time was raised to $250 a year.[2] In 1902 the secretary was receiving $85 a month, on condition that he could get enough affiliations to bring the money into the treasury, and devoting his entire time to the work of the Federation.[3]

One year later, at the Springfield convention of 1903, the secretary's pay was set at $100 a month, or $1,200 a year. The president's salary was about to be made $300 for the year when John H. Walker, of the United Mine Workers, moved that the president, too, be made a full-time officer with a salary the same as that of the secretary and that he should not be allowed to hold any state or county appoint-

[1] *Proc.* (1899), pp. 36–38.

[2] *Proc.* (1900), pp. 26 f. The Executive Board was authorized to appoint organizers at $3.00 a day when funds would permit.

[3] *Proc.* (1902), pp. 20, 34. Secretary Morris was elected for the first time in 1901. Some years later he related this incident: "I first became an officer of this organization at Joliet in 1901. The only friction I ever had with delegates to the State Federation of Labor was at that convention. I certainly did object to the action of the convention. When I was elected . . . . Joe Morton got up to set the salary for the coming year, and in a very nice address Joe placed my salary at $25 a month. The motion went through. Then Joe came to me and told me what he had done and how I was going to get $25 a month for the next year providing I could raise the $25 a month myself. I told the delegates I hadn't come to Joliet for the purpose of getting an office and try to do the work for pauper wages and they would have to give the job to somebody else. Morton, as usual being good natured, took the floor and moved to increase the salary to $35, giving me $10 increase as a result of my first strike. But he attached the provision that I would have it if I could get it and I must not hold the organization responsible for it. I got it."—*Proc.* (1912), p. 251.

ment. Walker's motion was adopted, on the theory that the president's added efforts would bring in enough new locals to pay his salary and that the Federation could cease hiring other organizers.[1] The Illinois State Federation of Labor has employed two full-time salaried officers continuously since 1903.[2]

With the growth of the Federation and increased compensation to its officers, responsible and capable men were willing to stay longer in its service; the organization profited in greater stability and power. This is apparent in reviewing the various administrations from 1898 to 1913.

Upon the retirement of Riefler, after the "housecleaning" started in 1894–95 had been completed, the Federation went into another slump. Now that the organization had been rescued from the domination of the "Chicago gang" no one seemed to know what to do with it; it lacked a continuous purpose and a program. From 1897 through the first few years of the new century the Federation was in an unstable, disorganized state, changing officers every year, and inviting by its own lack of direction the attentions of various ambitious politicians and unwelcome cliques.

Merrit B. Palmer, of Peoria, became president after a heated campaign of convention electioneering in 1897,[3] but early in his term he resigned to become a candidate for

[1] *Proc.* (1903), pp. 51–54.

[2] In 1907 the salaries of president and secretary were raised to $1,800.00 a year. Compensation for lost time on the part of other officers became $5.00 a day. —*Proc.* (1907), pp. 27, 43–44; *Proc.* (1912), p. 250. Again in 1912 salaries were increased, this time to $200.00 a month for the president and $175.00 a month for the secretary. The president's salary was made higher on the ground that he had to travel and was at more expense than the secretary, since hotel and railroad allowances were not always adequate; also, Secretary Morris was "drawing compensation from other sources" (probably alluding to his salary as a member of the state legislature).—*Proc.* (1912), pp. 173, 201–4.

[3] *Bloomington Bulletin*, September 16, 1897.

county assessor,[1] and Vice-President U. G. Hinman served out the year.

Hinman, like Palmer, was a member of the Typographical Union. He came from Springfield, where he worked as foreman in the printing department of the *Illinois Register*. He had gone into union politics at the suggestion of his superintendent in order to counteract the influence of the "radical state-house crowd" in the Springfield Typographical Union, and his views were extremely conservative—more those of an employer than a trade unionist. Hence, he was thoroughly disliked by the more radical members of the State Federation, and his opening address at the Decatur convention of 1898 was greeted with catcalls and hisses.[2]

His administration was a stormy one. P. F. Doyle, "a Chicago city hall politician," was secretary. "He wouldn't do anything and wouldn't let anybody else do anything," says Hinman; "so I removed him." This created considerable stir. Hinman spoke before the Chicago Federation of Labor, of which Doyle was president, and met with a noisy reception. "Gompers took a hand, and the result was that

[1] *Chicago Federationist*, April 6, 1898. Palmer was also for a time a candidate for the presidency of the International Typographical Union, but withdrew.—*Ibid.*, April 27, 1898.

[2] Hinman favored compulsory arbitration, which trade unionists of this era did not want. He was also criticised a great deal because of his attitude on department-store legislation. Chicago labor people wanted laws against department stores, providing that a merchant might handle only three lines under one roof; they wanted to preserve the "little fellow." Hinman opposed such agitation.

Today Hinman is president of the Standard Corporation, a Chicago advertising firm located on the North Side. This former head of the Illinois State Federation of Labor runs his printing plant non-union ("open shop"), and boasts that he has come out victorious in every one of seven strikes. He says that he pays the union scale or above and works union hours, but believes in the individual too much to relish union restrictions which stifle individual ambition. He thinks unions have done good work in the short-hour movement, but are too slow about changing their old ideas.—Interview, U. G. Hinman.

we went along without a secretary until the next convention." As for legislative work, the Federation did "not a thing." It had no organization and no influence.[1] At the conclusion of his term, Hinman, like many other presidents of the State Federation, stepped into a political job.[2]

The convention at Decatur in 1898 was particularly unharmonious and disorganized. Barney Cohen recalls that it "broke up in a row."[3] In addition to the trouble between President Hinman and Secretary Doyle in the previous year, there had been other difficulties. The Executive Board had delayed the publication of the proceedings of the Bloomington convention with the explanation that certain unauthorized persons were intending to use them in another "labor-directory" advertising scheme.[4] The miners appeared in force for the first time at Decatur and brought with them one of their quarrels, which came before the convention on the question of seating J. A. Crawford.[5] The echoes of a Chicago fight were heard in the exclusion of delegates from the Brewers' and Malsters' Union, and some enterprising publisher created a commotion with an unauthorized booklet distributed in the convention hall. It purported to be a

[1] Interview, U. G. Hinman.

[2] Edwin R. Wright observes that "by the time a man got out of the State Federation presidency he had done enough political favors so that he could get a political job," and former President Hinman's frank explanation of his own experience on this point is illuminating: "Springfield," he says, "is a peculiar place. If you get to be a prominent Methodist the politicians begin to cater to you in order to swing the Methodist vote. It's the same way with labor. As soon as I began to be prominent in labor circles and became president of the State Federation politicians began to come to see me. I was offered a job as clerk in the Bureau of Labor Statistics—$1,800 per year and nothing to do—so of course I took it. I went into politics and then into business."—Interview.

[3] Interview.

[4] Official letter to affiliated unions in the *Chicago Federationist*, March 23, 1898.

[5] Crawford, a former president of the Illinois Mine Workers, was at odds with W. D. Ryan, who held the office in 1898.—*Decatur Review*, September 28, 1898.

"Souvenir Edition" of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, but its real purpose seemed to be to fill the pockets of the issuer and to boom a few county candidates.[1] The convention was full of political intrigue. The *Chicago Federationist* referred mysteriously after its adjournment to "the smooth gentleman who declared he had the state federation fixed."[2]

When it came time to elect a president no one wanted the job, but Charles Dold, of Chicago, finally accepted after five other nominees had declined. He was a cigar-maker by trade, employed as organizer and business agent by the Piano Workers' Union, and had gone to Decatur with no idea of running for office.[3] When prevailed upon to accept the presidency he undertook to do what he could to rescue the Federation.[4] In the course of the year the secretary-treasurer

[1] *Decatur Review*, September 29, 1898. A special committee appointed in the convention denounced this and similar undertakings as "a detriment to the labor movement."—*Proc.* (1898), pp. 13, 27–28.

[2] From a series of articles entitled "Labor and Politics," specifically that of October 17, 1898.

[3] Dold was a member of the Aurora Cigarmakers' Union in the eighties and attended one or two sessions of the State Federation of Labor in those days. In the nineties he became prominent in Cigarmakers' No. 14 of Chicago, serving several terms as business agent. He also took an active part in the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly. In 1908–9 he served one term as president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, in 1918 was chairman of the Labor Party in Chicago, and in 1920 ran for lieutenant-governor on the Farmer-Labor ticket. At present he is running a piano store on Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago.—*Eight-Hour Herald*, March 16, 1897; Bigham, "The Chicago Federation of Labor", Master's Thesis, University of Chicago (1924), pp. 134, 142; interview, Charles Dold.

Dold has always been an independent Labor party man; he "believed in it in the eighties and still does." He is a progressive, and Pomeroy regarded him as having "socialistic tendencies," though he is not a socialist.—Interview, Charles Dold.

[4] In those days, he said, there was "no organization, just a gathering. Then the delegates went home; there was no work done during the year." The unions were smaller then than now, there were not as many of them, and they lacked funds. When there was something coming up in the State Federation in which they were particularly interested unions would send delegates. Many of them came to the convention, paid the per capita tax for three months in order to be entitled to seats, and then let their membership lapse again.—Interview, Charles Dold.

disappeared with the funds. A substitute was appointed and did the same. The Executive Board finally hit upon a more honest man, and at the next convention President Dold was able to report a small balance in the treasury.[1]

He also reported with some discouragement that

> the power wielded by the State Federation of Labor in the past and present has been of such small value to its affiliated organizations that the question of affiliation . . . . has become one of indifference to the trade unions of the state. The opinion seems to prevail that the money paid into the treasury of the Illinois State Federation of Labor is so much money wasted; that no results are achieved, no benefits obtained.

Dold regretfully admitted that his own observations tallied with this opinion, and he urged radical reforms in the laws of the organization.[2]

Some, though not all, of Dold's suggested reforms were embodied in a revised constitution adopted by this convention (1899, Danville); but Dold himself was defeated for re-election by R. E. McLean, a printer from Springfield.[3]

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] "President's Address," *Proc.* (1899), p. 5. He recommended that the duties of the president be defined so as to make it compulsory upon him to visit all trade unions in the state at least once every year; that he be provided with expense funds to carry out his duties; that the term of office be lengthened from one to two years; that the office of the president and the secretary be located in the same city; that the treasurer be required to give bond in the sum of $500; that the president and two members, appointed or elected, constitute a permanent legislative committee; that means of paying the expenses of such a committee at Springfield be provided by increasing the per capita tax from ½ cent to 1 cent a month.

[3] Hinman says that he took McLean on the force of the *Register* and sobered him down when other printing-offices would not hire him. Then McLean got to going to union meetings and became a very good speaker. He had only been in union affairs a couple of years when he ran for president of the State Federation. The vote was a tie between him and Dold at first, and the chairman, who didn't have much control over the convention, allowed both candidates to make speeches. Then another vote was taken, and McLean won. His gift of oratory got him the place, in spite of his inexperience in trade-union affairs, for many of the miners coming in at this time were uneducated and easily swayed by oratory.—Interview, U. G. Hinman.

McLean seems to have been another politician, though he evidently did something to merit a resolution of thanks from the next convention.[1] During his term also the secretary-treasurer made off with the funds.[2]

T. J. O'Brien, of the Chicago Typographical Union, next became president, and the State Federation once more lent its name to a labor directory as a means of paying off some of its accumulated debt. This directory, like its predecessors, was surrounded by an aroma of graft; it probably yielded more cash to the pockets of its promoters than to the Federation.[3]

The Executive Board selected Will R. Boyer, a broom-maker, to complete the term of the defaulting secretary-treasurer in 1900, and after serving a term of his own he presented a report to the Joliet convention (1901) which for the first time in the history of the Federation showed receipts of more than $1,000. In addition, the debts were paid off, and an Auditing Committee found the books in good condition with vouchers for all money spent. In grateful recognition of this uncommon state of affairs, Secretary Boyer was extended a hearty vote of thanks.[4]

At Joliet in 1901 there was a division in the ranks of the Chicago delegates, and the election contest was marked by bitter personalities on the floor of the convention. O'Brien and President James F. Bowman, of the Chicago Federation of Labor, rival Chicago candidates, withdrew from the race and Adam Menche, of Kewanee, was elected.[5] Menche was a cigar-maker, at one time had been prominent in the

[1] It stated that he "has discharged the duties of his responsible office in an intelligent, energetic and conscientious manner."—*Proc.* (1900), p. 22.

[2] *Proc.* (1900), pp. 4, 15.

[3] Barney Cohen, interview.

[4] *Proc.* (1901), p. 17.

[5] *Chicago Tribune*, October 1, 1901.

Denver, Colorado, Trades and Labor Assembly, had served as president of Cigarmakers' No. 14 in Chicago and as secretary-treasurer of the Chicago Union Label League; now, however, he resided in Kewanee.[1] He is variously characterized as "a good soul," "able, radical," "progressive, energetic, but opposed to radicalism," and as one who "trained with the 'Skinny' Madden crowd."[2]

Menche served as president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor for two years. The organization grew; yearly income rose to more than $3,000, and more than 200 delegates came to each convention.

At Joliet in 1901 James F. Morris, of Springfield, an Irish miner, became secretary-treasurer. He was re-elected each year thereafter until 1914. Morris was the first officer of the Federation to remain in its service steadily for more than three years. While not especially forceful or energetic, he was honest, an efficient secretary, and the trade unionists of the state, particularly the miners, had confidence in him. Auditing committees year after year complimented him upon the completeness and reliability of his accounts. Compare this with the demoralizing effect produced by the frequent defaulting of previous secretaries, and it will seem only just to ascribe to his conduct of the office much of the credit for the uninterrupted expansion enjoyed by the Federation during his years as its secretary.

In 1903 Barney Cohen became president, having unsuccessfully contested the election with Menche the year before.[3] Cohen remained in office for three years. He is

[1] *Eight-Hour Herald*, September 22, 1896; *Chicago Tribune*, October 1, 1901.

[2] Interviews with Charles Dold and Barney Cohen; *Eight-Hour Herald*, September 22, 1896; interview with Will R. Boyer.

[3] Union politics and state politics were both involved. In 1902 a large delegation of seceding teamsters under the leadership of Albert Young had been allowed seats in the convention after making a bargain with W. D. Ryan, of the miners.

described as a "politician," smooth and suave, always talking about keeping partisan politics out of the Federation but inclined to play politics himself behind the scenes.[1] He went from the Federation presidency into a position as Deputy State Factory Inspector.[2]

This was the heyday of Martin B. ("Skinny") Madden, the renowned and notorious boss of the Chicago building trades. Madden's crowd dominated the Chicago Federation of Labor much as Pomeroy's had done in the early nineties, with this difference: the battles of the nineties were fought for the most part with ballots and fists, while "Skinny" and his men did not scruple to use bullets and sluggers. The Chicago central body was "honeycombed with dishonesty and graft."[3] Madden was now devoting some attention to the State Federation of Labor, and Cohen was known as

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Ryan was promoting Cohen's candidacy, and part of the agreement between Ryan and the teamsters was that they should support Cohen. When election time came, Albert Young nominated Cohen according to agreement, but instructed his men to vote for Menche, who was re-elected.—Interview, Barney Cohen. In 1903 a press correspondent wrote that state politics entered prominently. Dave Ross of the Bureau of Labor Statistics was said to be the personal representative of Governor Yates, and Menche was called the "administration candidate." But when action was taken against the Mine Managers' Union, to which Ross belonged, Menche withdrew as a candidate and Cohen was elected.—*Chicago Tribune*, October 17, 18, 1903. This interpretation was denounced as false by Ross.

[1] Interview, Mary McDowell, Agnes Nestor.

[2] Cohen's own story is as follows: He entered a cigar factory at the age of nine, and on account of this early experience grew up to hate child labor. Becoming president of Cigarmakers' 14 and a delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor, he talked so much on one subject that he was sometimes called "Child Labor." He tried twice for the presidency of the State Federation and was defeated each time by Menche; the third time he was elected and he was twice re-elected. "Under my administration," he says, "labor directory grafters were stopped, the organization was strengthened, and for the first time the conventions were run for the good of labor and not for the good of the men in them." Legislative work during Cohen's term was chiefly directed toward improvement of the convict labor and child-labor laws.—Barney Cohen, interview.

[3] Bigham, *The Chicago Federation of Labor*, p. 14.

"Skinny Madden's man."[1] Madden attended several of the State Federation conventions, but hardly ever said anything or took part in the proceedings. "He got his influence from having eight or ten two-fisted followers who would punch on the nose anybody that wouldn't do what they wanted." Madden and his crew went to State Federation conventions mainly for a good time, however.[2] His power vanished after 1905.

Edwin R. Wright, of the Chicago Typographical Union, became president in 1906 at Streator and continued in office for seven years. Wright was honest, energetic, and intelligent. He was a personal and political friend of Governor Deneen, whose administration practically coincided with Wright's term of office. The years 1906–13, which comprise Wright's presidency, are remarkable for the rapid growth of the Federation and the astonishing amount of important labor legislation passed by the State Assembly.

In 1912 John H. Walker, state president of the United Mine Workers' organization, was nominated to head the Federation. Defeated that year, the miners swarmed into the Decatur convention of 1913 more than two hundred strong and elected Walker by a vote of 285 against 268 for Wright.[3] One year later James F. Morris retired after thirteen years of service as secretary-treasurer, and Victor A. Olander, of the Seamen's Union, replaced him. Thus the administration of "Walker and Olander" came into being, marking a new period in the Federation's history which will form the subject of Part III.

[1] *Chicago Record*, July 25, 1906.

[2] Edwin R. Wright, interview.

[3] In recognition of Wright's service to the Federation, and because he had been turned out of office suddenly without opportunity to look for another job, the retiring president was voted $500 with his discharge.—*Proc.* (1913), 216–19.

REFORM

The dominant impression one gets in following the activities of the Illinois State Federation of Labor through the disorganized years just before and after 1900 is that of a series of haphazard conventions, a piece of labor machinery running on without purpose or direction, offering a standing invitation to restless manipulators. That political henchmen and grafters took advantage of the opportunity, there is no doubt. Then the expanding labor movement and the increased demand for labor legislation began to build up the size and the prestige of the State Federation. As its conventions grew larger they became less subject to the manipulations of little cliques seeking their own ends and with the support of genuine trade unionists the Federation attained some degree of stability in leadership, policy, and program. This came about during the period under discussion, and the changes for the better were clinched by reforms in the laws or the organization.

Several efforts had been made before 1898 to bar partisan politicians from the State Federation of Labor,[1] and the constitution of 1901 contains under "Membership" the provision that "no person shall be eligible as a delegate to this Federation who holds an elective or appointive political position, or who is not a member in good standing of the organization from which his credentials come at the time of holding this convention."[2] But this section was disregarded. Some time during the Cohen—"Skinny" Madden régime it disappeared from the constitution altogether. "There are a great many delegates in this convention at the present time who, if the laws were enforced that govern this organization,

[1] See chap. vii.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 27. This was not to be construed to debar members of trade unions who were also members of state or municipal legislative bodies.

and if the laws of the American Federation of Labor were complied with to the letter, would not be eligible," said Albert Young in support of the seceding teamsters' plea for admission in 1903;[1] and in the next convention a delegate remarked that "delegates holding elective and appointive positions under the state government are here. This section does not seem to debar them."[2] The session of 1902 was described as "all politics" from start to finish.[3] It was about this time that the governor of Illinois backed a certain candidate for the presidency of the State Federation by sending all the game wardens to the convention.[4]

There were always bona fide trade unionists in the Federation who favored no political party save as one or the other promised to regard the interests of labor, and they were disgusted with these intrigues. Attempting to do constructive work for organized labor, they found themselves continually pestered by politicians working in the interests of rival factions. At Peoria in 1908 they forced a showdown. There was a great battle on in Illinois over the impending election of a United States senator in the General Assembly, and politicians from Chicago were on hand to see what could be done in the Federation of Labor. Other political workers attempted to prevent the adoption of a resolution against "Uncle Joe" Cannon, of Danville, who was denounced as the

[1] *Proc.* (1903), p. 50.

[2] *Proc.* (1904), p. 66.

[3] *Chicago Tribune*, October 17, 18, 19, 1902.

[4] Reminiscence by John H. Walker in 1916 convention, *Proc.* (1916), p. 299.

"The State Federation was bought and sold like a bag of potatoes," on some occasions, says Edwin R. Wright. A few hundred dollars and some drinks of beer was the price of a political indorsement.—Interview. Barney Cohen relates that certain alleged labor men used to go to politicians and engage to pass resolutions on certain subjects, or not to pass them, for $100.—Interview. "Election to the presidency of the State Federation meant a state political job, just as election to the presidency of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly used to mean a political job in the city of Chicago.—Charles Dold, interview.

"Congressional labor strangler."[1] This was too much. Delegate Hugh Brady offered an amendment to the constitution that

> no person shall be eligible as a delegate to this Federation who is not actively engaged at his or her trade and a member in good standing of the organization from which his credentials come at the time of holding this convention. Be it understood that this new law does not debar the paid officials of local unions or central bodies. . . . .[2]

Some who were in the convention on clouded credentials "recounted with quivering lips their lifelong struggle in the interests of Organized Labor and the terrible consequences likely to ensue if politics were admitted, and yet the politicians excluded."[3] But the amendment prevailed, and it was to be enforced.

Next year there was objection to the new section, but the convention remained adamant. "When I come here and sit with labor," said a delegate, "I want to sit with printers that print, with cigarmakers that make cigars, and with carpenters that use their saws and hammers." Others expressed similar views. "I have been connected for several years with various organizations and central bodies," said one, "and I want to tell you that no other State Federation of Labor ever amounted to anything until they got that clause into the constitution."[4]

[1] Report of Delegates, "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," November 1, 1908.

[2] *Proc.* (1908), pp. 33–34.

[3] Report of Delegates, "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," November 1, 1908.

[4] "I have seen men come in from the florists' union . . . . holding city positions," recounted another delegate, "and they don't know one flower from another." Members of the Federation had been drifting away because "it was not being presided over or being run by trade unionists, but had degenerated into a political 'gab fest.' "—From remarks of Delegates Bessette, Eskridge, and Straube, *Proc.* (1909), p. 182; *Proc.* (1908), pp. 182–86.

This law did exclude some friends of the labor movement, for example, Mary McDowell, a settlement worker who had helped to organize the Women's Trade Union League. "But we were willing to sacrifice for the sake of getting rid of political work," says Agnes Nestor.[1] John H. Walker declares that "the good done in keeping out crooks has more than balanced the unfairness to a few good men and women."[2]

In addition to the politicians, the Federation had to rid itself of other impediments to its progress. We have seen that "Skinny" Madden dabbled in its affairs for a few years. Sometimes the control of the State Federation was an asset to him. A writer in the *Chicago Record* in 1906 says,

> Recently he had President Cohen appoint a committee to investigate the Stock Yards. The members of the committee were named by Madden in his headquarters in Gilbert's saloon on Madison street, and Cohen was called in to officially sanction the appointments. The committee did its work faithfully as it was ordered, and found conditions in the Stock Yards ideal. The scheme was so plain, however, that little attention was paid to the "official" report of the committee, which could not tell the difference between a rendering tank and a steam boiler.[3]

In 1905 the Chicago Federation of Labor wrenched itself loose from Madden's grasp. This was the year when its ballot boxes were broken open by "hold-up" elements; the year when the more respectable members marched over to Brand's Hall between two lines of policemen and elected John Fitzpatrick president.[4] Then the reorganized Chicago Federation of Labor sent a "Purification Committee" to the Danville convention of the State Federation to contest Madden's power in that body. The first day's session

[1] Interview.

[2] Interview.

[3] *Chicago Record*, July 25, 1906.

[4] Bigham, *The Chicago Federation of Labor*, Master's thesis, University of Chicago (1924), p. 14.

developed the fact that they would have an uphill fight. John Madden, a Springfield brother of "Skinny," was appointed chairman of the Credentials Committee. The reformers, finding themselves outnumbered, telegraphed to Chicago for more delegates and brought half a dozen from the Teamsters' Union.[1] Still Madden had the lead, but the hotel expenses of his cohorts were a heavy burden, and the election was scheduled for the last day of the convention. Then some parliamentary sharpshooter in "Skinny's" ranks concocted a report of the Committee on Rules which changed the working orders of the convention from Roberts' Rules to Cushing's Rules. The report was gaveled through despite suspicious protests from the purificationists, and then next day, under Cushing's Rules of Order, Madden was able to proceed with an immediate election.[2] Scenes similar to those attending the Chicago Federation of Labor fights accompanied the voting. There was a demonstration in the convention hall, and "the delegates at one time made a rush for Charles Segerstrom of the Chicago ice teamsters when he attempted to vote a proxy. The incident showed signs of developing into a pitched battle until Segerstrom, on the advice of friends, left the hall."[3] Barney Cohen, of Chicago, and J. J. Kearney, of Quincy, were the opposing candidates for president. Cohen and "the entire machine slate" were elected.[4]

The "purificationists" made strenuous efforts in favor of a referendum scheme for the election of officers and other constitutional reforms, but Madden's following yielded

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, October 18, 1905.

[2] Report of Delegates, "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," November 5, 1905; interview, Edwin R. Wright.

[3] *Chicago Tribune*, October 19, 1905.

[4] Report of Delegates, "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," November 5, 1905.

nothing. After electing their candidate, the Madden men devoted an hour before adjournment to "grilling" the "purification" delegates and poking fun at them; feeling was so bitter that the two Chicago factions went home on separate trains. President Barney Cohen heralded the triumphal return of the Maddenites with a pronouncement that had a strangely familiar ring, "I stand for trade unionism pure and simple and not for wishy-washy reforms . . . . . I intend to begin a crusade for a return to old style unionism, and that means a cleaning out of all those leaders who profess to be engaged in purifying the labor movement."[1]

Two months in advance of the next convention Madden was reported to be laying his wires for a desperate fight to retain control in the State Federation. The American Federation of Labor had already repudiated him and his "personally conducted" union by ordering it expelled from the Chicago Federation, and Chicago labor officials were prepared to see that he should no longer retain his foothold in the state organization. L. P. Straube, of the Allied Printing Trades Council, for example, declared that Madden would not be seated in the state convention with the consent of any of the printing trades.[2]

Evidently Madden found the situation hopeless, for he was not present at the Streator convention in 1906, and Barney Cohen was not a candidate for re-election. Once more the Illinois State Federation of Labor had thrown off the clutch of a "Chicago gang."

Early in the century an organization known as "National Mine Managers' Association, Illinois Division No. 1," was sending five delegates to the State Federation conventions, chief among them David Ross, of the Bureau of Labor

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 21, 1905.

[2] *Chicago Record*, July 25, 1906.

Statistics. "A mine manager," explained W. D. Ryan to the convention of 1903, "or as we sometimes call him, a pit boss, is a man who has charge of the underground workings of a coal mine. The United Mine Workers will not have them in their organization under any circumstances. They are organized separately, and have a charter from the American Federation of Labor."[1]

This delegation incurred the wrath of the Springfield convention (1903) when in the course of a discussion of the great anti-union campaign then being inaugurated by employers all over the country Dave Ross rose and spoke in favor of the "open shop." Thus to defend the slogan of the anti-union employers was heresy. John H. Walker, of the United Mine Workers, presented a resolution, "That no bosses, contractors, or employers' associations be allowed to affiliate or be represented in the Illinois State Federation of Labor." But since the mine managers were organized under an American Federation of Labor charter, the State Federation could not well exclude them; so the resolution was referred to the American Federation of Labor delegates with instructions to work for the revocation of charters held by such organizations.[2]

In succeeding conventions Dave Ross and his colleagues were accused of doing political work for the Republicans,

[1] *Proc.* (1903), p. 36.

[2] *Proc.* (1903), pp. 36–37. Mr. Scaife of the mine managers argued that the aims of his organization were the same as those of labor organizations, namely, to improve the conditions of their trade. The mine manager "has no power to hire or discharge." The attitude of the Federation, however, was expressed by one delegate as follows: "I don't think anyone wishes to deny the mine managers the right to organize. What we desire is that they have no voice in our federation . . . . . I don't see the justice of allowing mine managers to come into a convention of laborers and help form the policy of the organization to suit their own ends. Let them have a federation of their own. I don't believe the boss or foreman of any shop or mine should be a member of a labor organization; they should have organizations of their own.—H. C. Perry, in *Proc.* (1903), pp. 36–37.

notably for Congressman Joe Cannon, of Danville, the autocratic speaker of the House, whom labor bitterly opposed. This further determined Walker and those who shared his views to oust the mine managers.[1] In 1907 at Rockford a constitutional amendment was adopted that "no employer shall be eligible as a delegate."[2]

Thus, during the first decade of the present century the Illinois State Federation of Labor not only grew immensely in membership and power, but also ridded itself of political appointees and "labor skates"; excluded those who might speak from the standpoint of the employer rather than the worker; and made of itself a thoroughly trade-union body. This time the reforms were permanent, and the conditions of the nineties and those of the first few years after 1900 have not been allowed to recur.

[1] Interview, John H. Walker.

[2] *Proc.* (1907), p. 27.

CHAPTER XI

FURTHER CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE AUTHORITY OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

Until 1899 membership in the Illinois State Federation of Labor was open to any labor organization that would "indorse this constitution" and pay dues; but in that year the requirement was added that members of the Federation must be chartered by or affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or one of its constituent national and international unions.[1] This was aimed at secessionists and dual movements.

During the year 1901–2, Z. T. Trumbo, of the Pontiac Progressive Union, and Rev. S. A. Harris, of Federal Labor Union No. 9302, at Dwight, both members of the State Federation's Executive Board, were prime movers in the "Laborers' Protective Association," a new organization declared seceding and antagonistic by the American Federation of Labor. The American Federation of Labor suspended their locals; they lost the right to membership in the Illinois State Federation; and their offices were filled by others.[2]

Shortly afterward the Chicago teamsters defied the International Team Drivers' Union by refusing to admit small team-owners to membership, seceded, and in 1902 formed a new national union including only teamsters and helpers.[3] Led by Albert Young, forty or fifty of the seceding teamsters descended on the East St. Louis Convention of the

[1] Constitution, in *Proc.* (1899), p. 36; also, *Proc.* (1900), p. 26; *Proc.* (1901), p. 27.

[2] *Proc.* (1902), p. 3.

[3] John R. Commons, *Trade Unionism and Labor Problems* (first series), chap. iii.

State Federation of Labor that fall and demanded to be admitted. They hoped to get help from the State Federation in establishing themselves as a permanent organization. R. E. McLean, of Springfield, and other downstaters who led the fight against violating the laws of the American Federation of Labor to admit these rebel unionists were strong enough to force a sudden adjournment of the convention after it had been in session only two hours, and at midnight they got a unanimous report through the Credentials Committee which recommended rejection of the teamsters' credentials. Then Albert Young appealed to W. D. Ryan, of the United Mine Workers; there was a caucus of miners and teamsters, and a bargain was struck whereby the Chicago teamsters were to continue with the miners and let them dominate the convention. A majority of the Credentials Committee reversed itself, the chairman of the convention permitted the Chicago teamsters to vote to seat themselves, and thus began the participation of an organization that has since become one of the most important in the Illinois State Federation of Labor.[1]

When James Beattie, the Illinois Federation's delegate, arrived at the American Federation of Labor convention in New Orleans some weeks later, he was told that he could not be seated because he had been illegally elected. But officials of the Illinois State Federation of Labor helped to arrange a

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, October 15, 16, 1902; *Proc.* (1902), pp. 16–18; interview with Barney Cohen; reminiscences by W. D. Ryan, in *Proceedings of the Illinois State Federation of Labor* (1926), p. 60.

Ryan in 1926 said of the affair, "I took the position, with some of the other advanced thinkers, that we were trying to organize the workers of the country, not trying to keep any of them outside the movement. I believe I was the delegate who moved to seat the Chicago team-drivers. The Credentials Committee was right, of course, but we wanted more money for the State Federation and we wanted more members. Then the chairman permitted the forty teamsters' delegates to vote to seat themselves, and it carried."—*Proc.* (1926), p. 60.

hearing of the difficulties between the two teamster factions; a meeting took place at which W. D. Ryan, of the Mine Workers, President Menche, of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, Secretary Morrison, of the American Federation of Labor, and the rival teamsters were present, and after hard words—some of them about the Illinois State Federation—the whole dispute was put on the road to peaceable adjustment.[1]

Since this time, however, the Illinois Federation has been much more wary about opening its arms to secessionists and flouting the authority of the American Federation of Labor as well as its own constitution. In 1909 there was a hot fight over the contentions of a seceding faction from the Electrical Workers' Union which claimed to represent 80 per cent of the rank and file in revolt against an entrenched and defiant officialdom. Already state federations in Ohio and Iowa and some city central bodies had recognized the seceders instead of the group sanctioned by the American Federation of Labor and had had their charters revoked.[2] President Wright, opening the convention at Belleville, spoke of the seriousness of the situation.

> You have seen organizations like this rent asunder, the members going home with bitterness in their hearts. . . . . We are going to stick to the chartered body, the State Federation of Labor, and its principles as laid down in our constitution. We are a chartered body from the American Federation of Labor, and while we remain such there will be no action recognized from the chair that will do anything to injure our parent body . . . . and the international unions to which we hold allegiance.[3]

This was the position finally adopted by the convention, for most of the leaders argued that the real question at issue was

[1] Report of Delegate Beattie, *Proc.* (1903), p. 40.

[2] According to statements in the debate, *Proc.* (1909), pp. 17–23; 34–47; 156–68.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

not the merits of the controversy within the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers but the authority of the American Federation of Labor to act as final arbiter in all such disputes. Nevertheless, Duncan McDonald, Adolph Germer, and other delegates of liberal sympathies, most of them Socialists from the miners' union, waged a vigorous fight for the revolting electrical workers, and for a time there was an uproar which threatened to develop into a split similar to those which had occurred in other state federations over the same question. When the final vote was taken, amid wild applause, the Illinois State Federation of Labor yielded to the superior authority of the American Federation of Labor.[1]

Other disputes arose in subsequent years over the seating of delegates, notably in 1912 as the result of an outlaw strike of stereotypers in Chicago,[2] but in none of these was the State Federation in imminent danger of disruption, as it was in 1909, and in no case of this kind has it assumed to challenge the American Federation of Labor as it did in 1902. As the Federation grew older and larger it became less impetuous, more formal and regular.

CENTRAL BODIES

A vexing problem was the part to be played by central bodies in the State Federation of Labor. In the early days city federations and trades assemblies had been the mainstays of the state organization; now they were outweighed by delegates from local unions. But central bodies were still

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 168. Later in the session Adolph Germer introduced a resolution which criticised the decision of the American Federation of Labor Executive Council in the matter. A substitute by Matthew Woll was adopted, merely instructing the Illinois State Federation of Labor's delegate to the American Federation of Labor Convention at Toronto to work for a speedy settlement of the controversy.—*Ibid.*, p. 165.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 41–69, 99–103.

entitled to five delegates each in the convention, and their taxes were only $10 a year. The result was that many local unions were content to be represented indirectly through a city federation or through one of the many local trades councils that were springing up; thus they avoided payment of a state per capita tax and the Federation was deprived of revenue. This was felt to be decidedly unfair, for a few locals combined in a town Building Trades Council or a Printing Trades Council might have five delegates in the Federation and pay only $10 a year, while another local with three or four hundred members affiliated directly would be entitled to three delegates and would pay in per capita tax as much as five central bodies.[1]

The situation was discussed in 1903, and the first proposal was that only one central body from each city be allowed representation.[2] But it was the policy of the American Federation of Labor to encourage central organizations; so this plan was abandoned. Instead, central bodies were taxed $25 per annum instead of $10, thus making them share the expenses of the Federation more equitably with local unions.

In 1909 the number of delegates which a central body might send was reduced from five to three, and at the same time it was provided that "no one shall be entitled to represent a central body unless his or her own local union is affiliated and in good standing with the Illinois State Federation of Labor."[3] An attempt to get this provision repealed met with decided refusal in 1912.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1903), p. 46.

[2] *Proc.* (1903), p. 45.

[3] *Proc.* (1909), p. 191.

[4] *Proc.* (1912), p. 196.

FINANCE

During the opening years of this period the Federation was again in debt. In 1899 the Ways and Means Committee recommended that the secretary borrow $150 from the central labor bodies of the state for the purpose of carrying on the business of the organization.[1] Next year the per capita tax was increased from 1 cent to 1½ cents a month, and in order to pay off a debt of $500 the convention voted an assessment of 2 cents a member on affiliated locals and $5.00 on central bodies.[2] In 1901 there was a 5-cent per capita assessment ($3.00 for central bodies) in addition to the regular tax, the proceeds to constitute a special legislative fund.[3] For several years the Federation followed this practice, raising a legislative fund by special assessment, and keeping it separate from the tax proceeds; it is probable that some unions that were not regular dues-paying members of the Federation were induced to contribute to this fund.

Though the financial condition of the Federation had been improving steadily for some time, the biggest enlargement of its working funds came in 1908 when the tax was reduced to 1 cent and the miners joined in a body. Thereafter, the effort of Federation leaders was put forth to bring in the locals of every other craft, and their efforts met with considerable success. The new status given to central bodies stopped a leak and assisted in the campaign for direct affiliation of local unions, with corresponding financial improvement to the Federation. In line with this program of inducing locals to bear their share of the expense in the State Federation's work was the movement to bring about pay-

[1] *Proc.* (1899), p. 31.

[2] *Proc.* (1900), p. 20.

[3] *Proc.* (1901), p. 25. At the same time the usual initiation fee and per capita tax was cut in half for unions composed exclusively of women.

ment of tax on the full membership. A great many locals with, for example, 1,200 members were paying tax to the Federation on only 500.[1] In 1909 it was proposed that each local union should be required to pay a per capita tax on its full membership, failing which its delegates should be barred from the annual convention. Though it was argued that this provision might drive out many unions who would otherwise remain in, the rule was adopted.[2] It was never strictly enforced, however.[3] The next convention added that "local unions that have been affiliated and have run in arrears must pay up their entire back per capita tax" before being eligible to representation again. This was aimed at those locals that dropped out from time to time and then rejoined the Federation just before conventions under the old law which allowed them to apply for a new charter, pay a few months' per capita tax, and be eligible to send delegates.[4]

All these provisions were means of tightening up the organization of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, giving it a stable foundation of constantly affiliated locals, and insuring it a steady and sufficient income for the prosecution of its work.[5]

[1] Delegate Knott, of Typographical 16, confessed in 1909 that for years his organization had numbered 3,100 members and had paid per capita to the State Federation on only 1,200. Now, he said, they were paying on all 3,100. "I am proud to say that my union today is in a position to urge the adoption of the same course by every other union in the state. It is a shame and a disgrace that we should dodge these taxes, simply because they are honest dues and we ought to pay them." Reference was made to "organizations affiliated here with something like 4,000 members, and they have but 100 affiliated with this State Federation."—*Proc.* (1909), pp. 189–90.

[2] *Proc.* (1909), p. 189.

[3] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[4] *Proc.* (1910), pp. 121–22.

[5] One other phase of the effort to get support from all, rather than a minority, of the labor organizations of the state who benefited from the legislative activities of the Federation was a rather novel proposal advanced by President Wright and

THE CONVENTION

Changes proper to its growth in size and importance took place in the procedure of the annual convention. The convention remained the supreme governing body and the court of last appeal in the affairs of the Federation, though the officers took on much more responsibility on the one hand and there was a movement for referring matters of moment to referendum vote on the other.

The time of meeting continued to be in the fall (October, except for two years); and the honor and profit of entertaining the delegates passed among various cities of the state. In 1910 there was discussion of a proposal to make Springfield the permanent meeting-place of the organization, and chief of the arguments against this plan was the effectiveness of the state convention in strengthening the trade-union movement in the towns which it visited.[1]

Of course, as in any large convention with much business to transact and only a few days in which to do it, all but the most important matters came to be threshed out in com-

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advocated by the Illinois State Federation of Labor's delegate in American Federation of Labor conventions. The plan was that the American Federation of Labor should collect an additional one cent a member a month from all of its affiliated unions at the same time that it collected dues for its own support. Then the fund so obtained should be distributed among the various state federations of labor in proportion to the total American Federation of Labor membership in each state.

"This would more than double our income and allow the placing of several additional organizers in the field," said President Wright in his 1911 report. "It would do much more than that; it would effectually put a stop to all secession movements and would greatly encourage and enlarge the effectiveness of the state bodies."

Again in 1912: "Under this plan no state dues would be collected and every organized worker in the state would automatically bear his just proportion of expense. This was the third time our delegate has presented such a resolution and the third time it was defeated, but last time it had many more friends than heretofore.—*Proc.* (1911), p. 20; (1912), p. 43.

[1] *Proc.* (1910), pp. 122–27.

mittee and disposed of by adoption of a committee report. Only matters which required emphasis or on which a strong difference of opinion prevailed were discussed extensively on the convention floor. Toward the last of the period the list of committees grew longer. In 1913 it read: Credentials, Rules and Order of Business, Union Label, Fraternal Relations, Grievances and Appeals, Constitution, Initiative and Referendum, Resolutions, Industrial Education, Officers' Reports, Organization, Appreciation, Miscellaneous Business, Finance and Donations, Prison Labor, Co-operative Industries.[1]

Three-day conventions were superseded by four-day sessions in 1909, and in 1913 the convention met for a short time on the morning of the fifth day. Stenographic reports of the convention's proceedings were inaugurated in 1903, and though not all remarks were printed in full the record was quite complete. For two years after 1906 the Federation reverted to its former practice of publishing only the text of resolutions and reports with brief statements of motions, debate, and action taken; but in 1908 it was resolved to record and print the proceedings verbatim.[2]

An interesting development in the conventions of this period is the passing of the Chicago dominance. Up until the middle nineties Chicago had usually furnished a majority of the delegates, and even in 1898 a newspaper reporter wrote: "It looks like the convention was four-fifths Chicago and one-fifth state at large."[3] This situation was changed by the increased affiliation of the miners and other downstate organizations.

About 1902 the sessions of the Federation became important enough in themselves that Chicago papers and news-

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 24–45.

[2] *Proc.* (1908), p. 22.

[3] *Decatur Herald*, September 29, 1898.

gathering associations detailed staff correspondents to cover its proceedings. In the *Chicago Tribune*, for example, almost a full column each day was devoted to the doings of the convention of 1902, instead of the three to ten inches (and sometimes no mention at all) of previous years. In 1903 the Federation convention was on the front page, column one.

WOMEN'S SESSIONS

The Illinois State Federation of Labor was the first such organization to devote a half-day session in its conventions to the problems of women workers.[1] Back in the eighties and nineties there had occasionally been a woman delegate or two at the Federation's meetings, but it was not until the organization of the Women's Trade Union League that women began to play any consistent part in its deliberations.

In 1904 at Aurora President Cohen introduced two representatives of the newly formed League, and Miss Nichols explained the nature of the movement then being launched. A motion was passed to "endorse the Illinois Women's Trade Union League and accept them into membership," and, by amendment, "that the delegates be instructed to take an active part in organizing Women's Union Labor Leagues in their own cities and towns when they return home."[2]

Two years later (1906) Miss Mary McDowell, president, and Miss Agnes Nestor, member of the Executive Board, appeared on behalf of the Women's Trade Union League. They were escorted to the rostrum and "made eloquent pleas for our co-operation in their efforts for the uplifting of

[1] Statement of Mary McDowell, *Proc.* (1912), p. 70.

[2] *Proc.* (1904), p. 61.

the working women of America."[1] They were then given voice and vote in the convention.[2] Next year the Federation turned over one whole morning session to the representatives of women workers. Miss Mary McDowell, after taking charge, spoke of the need for co-operation between men and women in the labor movement. Then she introduced in turn Miss Anna Nichols, secretary of the National Women's Trade Union League, Miss Agnes Nestor, Miss Steghagen, of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, Miss Minnie Johnson, of the Garment Workers' Union, Mrs. Raymond Robins, Miss Breckenridge, chairman of the legislative committee of the Illinois Women's Trade Union League, and Miss Reardon, "from the striking telegraphers." These speakers discussed the wages and working conditions of women, their legislative protection, and conditions in their various occu-

[1] *Proc.* (1906), p. 24. Miss McDowell was a social worker; she had been head of the University of Chicago Settlement for some years, and still remains at that post. She was not a trade unionist herself, but a sympathizer—"allies," they were called in the Women's Trade Union League. She had helped to organize girls in the Stock Yards. After her term as president, Miss Agnes Nestor, a glove-worker, became president and still serves in that capacity.

[2] During the same convention some delegates visited a mine near Streator at the noon hour and President Cohen, with one or two others, got lost and returned late for the afternoon session. In the meantime delegates in the convention requested Miss McDowell to take the chair, though she insisted she was no parliamentarian. She finally did so, because friends suggested it was the first time an opportunity had been offered a woman to preside over a labor meeting of this kind and the chance should be accepted.

While she presided, the delegates seized the opportunity to bring up and pass a political resolution denouncing Speaker Joe Cannon, of the federal House of Representatives. President Cohen would never have allowed this resolution to come up. Miss McDowell was lobbying in Washington at this time for an appropriation to pay for a comprehensive investigation of the working conditions of women and children in the United States, and at first she feared that the incident would injure her cause by antagonizing Speaker Cannon, for the papers played up quite prominently the fact of her presiding and chronicled the action taken. She actually found, however, that Cannon treated her with more deference afterward than before; Cannon got the idea, she says, that she had more power in the labor movement than was really the case.—Interview, Mary E. McDowell.

pations. On instructions from the convention, the secretary incorporated in the official proceedings much of the information presented by the women delegates.[1]

This half-day session conducted by the Women's Trade Union League became a custom and was a regular feature of the annual convention for seven years. In 1914, after President Walker took office, special sessions for the women were discontinued; he felt, and the women agreed, that from then on it would be better to have the women's representatives take their part in the proceedings on the same footing as the men.[2]

INTERSTATE CO-OPERATION

In 1909 President Wright suggested that invitations be extended to the state federations of Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Indiana to meet in joint session with the Illinois State Federation of Labor at a great interstate convention. The idea took instantly. "Many of the delegates discussed that feature of the report in glowing terms and it was the general feeling that a joint labor meeting of the character suggested would become a strong political whip by which labor could force the two great political parties to adopt desired labor planks in their platforms."[3]

The committee which reported on this recommendation was equally enthusiastic. They urged that the Executive Board be empowered to make all arrangements for holding such a meeting in 1911, and "that at the convention two years hence when representation, no doubt, will be present from Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin and Indiana that steps be taken and means devised whereby representatives of the State Federation may be sent to Washington, D. C., during

[1] *Proc.* (1907), pp. 31–43.

[2] Interview, Mary E. McDowell.

[3] *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 1909

the sessions of the national congress. . . . . " In conclusion, they hoped that "the future convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor will be recognized and given credit for being the most advanced body of its character in promulgating the principles of state unionism, and a great aid . . . . to the men and women of labor."[1] In accordance with this plan, the convention city for 1911 (Springfield) was selected two years in advance.

The "interstate" convention of 1911 failed to materialize on the scale originally conceived. Five nearby states, however, sent one representative each: Miss Connors, of Missouri; Fred Brockhausen, secretary of the Wisconsin State Federation; Secretary Waterman, of the Michigan State Federation; President Perkins of the Indiana Federation; and Secretary Thomas, from Ohio.[2] President Wright announced,

> I say this is going to be the most remarkable State Federation ever held. We are going to blot out state lines . . . . . We are going to show the employers of these states that labor can get together. With the consent of this convention, sometime during the session we are going to take up the question of a group organization in all these states, fighting for uniform laws and better conditions. . . . . We will make a united fight, something that has never been attempted before.[3]

A Fraternal Relations Committee, appointed to consult with these representatives to originate a plan for joint action, reported in favor of "biennial conferences of a representative from each state branch of the American Federation of Labor" for the purpose of "uniform action in the matter of labor legislation in the several states." The report was signed by the visiting fraternal delegates, as well as by the Illinois committee, and was adopted by the convention.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1909), pp. 125, 143.

[2] *Proc.* (1911), p. 9.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Proc.* (1911), p. 160.

Two succeeding conventions adopted similar reports and the Illinois Federation's representative in the American Federation of Labor was instructed to confer with the representatives of other state federations regarding such a plan. In 1912 the Executive Board was directed to try to arrange a conference of Executive Board members of surrounding states for the purpose of drafting plans for greater uniformity and effectiveness in the campaigns for legislation, and the president was authorized to appoint a board member to attend the State Federation conventions of these same states in the capacity of fraternal delegate.[1]

The plans promoted by President Wright and the Illinois Federation for an interstate convention and then for a biennial conference of state federation representatives were not carried out as first suggested. But they bore fruit in the custom which has since prevailed among neighboring state federations of exchanging fraternal delegates. The idea of biennial State Federation conferences for the purpose of co-ordinating state labor legislative efforts throughout the country still seems a good one today; perhaps sometime it may be put into practice under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor.

CUMULATIVE VOTING REJECTED; THE REFERENDUM

Ever since its founding in 1884 the Illinois State Federation had tacitly followed the "one man one vote" system in the conduct of its conventions. When the question was raised just before the election of officers in 1904 the convention made the rule explicit: "That each delegate be entitled to cast only his individual ballot."[2] Local unions might send one delegate for each hundred members, but if a union

[1] *Proc.* (1912), p. 128.

[2] *Proc.* (1904), p. 74.

entitled to thirty seats in the convention sent only one delegate it had only one vote.

A proposal to adopt a modification of the cumulative voting plan used in the American Federation of Labor was introduced by representatives of the United Mine Workers at the Illinois State Federation convention of 1913 in Decatur. Each delegate, it was suggested, should have one vote if he represented one hundred members or less, and an additional vote for each additional one hundred members represented by him. But no delegate should have more than five votes.[1]

The miners, having brought all their locals into the Federation by action of their state organization, were paying dues on each of their members. But many of the local unions did not feel financially able to pay the expense of a full contingent of delegates to the State Federation every year. The proposed amendment, leaders of the mine-workers argued, would enable such locals to have a weight in the Federation more nearly proportional to their dues-paying membership without incurring the unnecessary expense of additional delegates.[2]

President Wright and others opposed the plan. "I believe the Illinois State Federation of Labor is one of the organizations in the United States where there is no aristocracy, where every man comes in with one vote and one vote alone, and in a labor union that is the plan I favor." As for the size of the convention, "the biggest advertisement an organization can have is the point of interest, and that sometimes means the point of numbers. . . . . The first question a man on the street will ask is 'How many delegates have

[1] *Proc.* (1913), p. 181. Central and district organizations, under this plan, were to have three votes. No organization might be represented by proxy.

[2] John H. Walker, in *Proc.* (1913), pp. 182–83.

you?' " Delegate Rowley of the Typographical Union believed that "this convention is getting too large to be handled properly, but I do not favor any one man coming down here because he represents four or five thousand people, and casting all their votes. I would rather have the representation cut down than to have that done"; and James B. Connors of the Switchmen remarked that

> in the American Federation of Labor conventions the small organizations that have only a few votes—one hundred votes or something of that kind—don't stand any more show than a jack rabbit of getting anything through if it is contrary to the wishes and desires of certain individuals in that convention who have two thousand or three thousand votes. . . . . The cumulative system of voting in this convention is a serious proposition and a dangerous one.

Delegate Briggs, speaking for the teamsters, was of like opinion.[1] The cumulative voting plan was rejected, 253 to 175.[2]

The real issue in the background was control of the Federation, particularly in the election of officers. Leaders in the Miners' Union were backing John H. Walker for the presidency against Edwin R. Wright, and Wright had won out in the preliminary skirmish the year before. At Danville in 1912 there had been 47 delegates from the scattered locals of miners; in 1913 their leaders decided they should really be represented according to their strength, so at Decatur there were 212 mine-workers seated in the convention before they stopped pouring in. Walker was elected, but the cumulative plan which would have enabled the miners to maintain their voting supremacy without sending so many delegates failed to carry.

The agitation for a referendum election of officers, which would remove the election from the convention entirely and give to every group a weight in proportion to its

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 181–87.

[2] *Ibid.*

membership, regardless of the number of delegates it could afford to send, was also lead by the miners. When it was successful at the opening of the next period the chief reason for cumulative voting disappeared and the matter was dropped. It has not been brought up since.

The first serious attempt to incorporate the principle of the referendum in Federation affairs was made in 1902 when J. J. Sonsterby and L. P. Straube introduced a constitutional amendment providing that "any and all amendments or additions to this constitution, adopted at any session of a regular or special convention, shall not become laws until approved by a majority vote of all bodies affiliated."[1] The line of argument advanced in favor of this proposition is typical of that employed throughout the many debates over the referendum in future years: (1) The Federation advocates the initiative and referendum in state and national affairs; to be consistent it must employ it in the conduct of its own business. (2) Most national and international unions make use of the referendum in their internal affairs. (3) Many organizations not financially able to send delegates to the conventions might affiliate if they knew that they would have some voice in determining Federation policies. (4) Organizations affiliated already but unable to send delegates to represent their full membership would no longer be deprived of their fair voting strength.[2]

This proposal was regarded as something of a departure, which ought to be investigated carefully before adoption; so it was printed in the proceedings and referred to the incoming Executive Board.[3] It seems to have been pigeonholed, for there was no discussion of the matter in subsequent conventions.

[1] *Proc.* (1902), p. 77, where the full text of the plan is given.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

A referendum plan for the election of officers was advanced by the "purification" faction from Chicago in 1905, but "Skinny" Madden's crew knocked it on the head, as they did all other suggestions for reform.[1] In 1906 the convention instructed the Executive Board "to draw up something along the lines of the initiative and referendum system," but when the board reported the following year it unanimously opposed the referendum plan of election. It was called impracticable, chiefly on the grounds of expense.[2]

Again in 1911 sentiment in favor of the referendum revived, chiefly on account of the great amount of political jockeying which the election of that year had caused in the convention.[3] Finally, in 1913, the Federation concurred in a referendum resolution presented by the miners, and the Executive Board was instructed "to frame a law to take the place of the present provision in the constitution relative to the election of officers, and report to the next annual convention. . . . ."[4] The plan framed by the Executive Board, after considerable argument, went to the affiliated unions for adoption or rejection, and in 1915 came into effect. Officers of the Illinois State Federation of Labor have been elected by referendum ever since, though the continuation of that method remained a live issue for many years and provoked wordy battles in the conventions.[5]

[1] *Proc.* (1905), p. 34.

[2] *Proc.* (1906), p. 20; (1907), pp. 23–24.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), p. 219.

[4] *Proc.* (1913), p. 188.

[5] See Part IV.

CHAPTER XII

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Thus far little has been said regarding those activities of the Federation not connected with its legislative work. To be sure, legislative efforts were by far the most important part of the Federation's program; but to some extent in the eighties, and to a greater extent after a new emphasis on economic action, collective bargaining, and the trade agreement had developed in the nineties, the State Federation of Labor exerted itself for other than legislative ends.

The Federation sponsored a certain amount of what is known as "organization work," directed both at increasing its own affiliations and banding the unorganized into trade unions. Unions about to undertake an organization drive in Illinois often came first to the State Federation for its indorsement, and, particularly after full-time officers were employed, for the co-operation of its officers. Several times the Federation resolved to encourage the organization of women workers and donated money to the Women's Trade Union League for that purpose.[1] It recommended to the American Federation of Labor in 1905 that some provision be made for organizing "a class of workmen who are operating machines in various factories and shops" but who "are not machinists,"[2] and in 1911 it offered to co-operate in the organization of migratory workers.[3]

The annual convention itself was an organizing device. "We had a State Federation convention in Peoria a year or

[1] *Proc.* (1909), p. 155; (1913), pp. 142, 173.

[2] *Proc.* (1905), p. 30.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 210–11.

two ago, and it did more good than all the agitation of a lot of fellows in a year's time," said W. A. Allton.[1] Not only could the patronage of delegates at hotels, barber shops, cigar stores, and restaurants be used as an organizing lever, but the presence of business agents and organizers from many different trades had the effect of overhauling the union organization of the convention city. In his free moments each delegate was likely to inquire into the status of his own craft locally. The following discussion in the proceedings of the Aurora convention (1904) is so illuminating that it is quoted here almost in full:

Delegate Mack Taylor: I should like to know if there are any union barbers in Aurora?

Delegate Davis: There are probably a number of men in the city who are carrying cards in their pockets, but there are no union barber shops. I think we promised you last year if you came here you would meet in one of the best organized cities in the state. We have tried to redeem that promise, but we have had some battles in the meantime, and although we have come out somewhat disfigured we are still in the ring.

Delegate Taylor: We would like to know where those men with cards in their pockets are. Half a loaf is better than no bread.

Delegate Straube: I think it is essential that some form of resolution be introduced here. I therefore move the following:

Resolved, That, inasmuch as the deplorable condition in the ranks of the tonsorial artists of the City of Aurora has compelled the delegates to the Illinois State Federation of Labor, in a spirit of self-defense, to provide a fine for any person who permitted a non-union barber to prepare him for his debut in polite society in this city,

Resolved, That no delegate be permitted to shave his fellow delegates under penalty of being fined twice the sum assessed the forgetful delegates.

The motion was seconded.

Delegate Taylor: I move as an amendment that the parties who received the five dollar fines have five thousand posters printed immediately for distribution in this city to show why we are not being shaved by the barbers here.

[1] *Proc.* (1910), pp. 122–27.

President Cohen: I would suggest that a committee be appointed immediately after the adjournment of this session to endeavor to organize the barbers of this city so we can get shaved tomorrow morning.

(The chair, on motion, appointed such a committee.)

Delegate Huffman: There are cold feet here among others besides the barbers. I am a teamster, and in going through the streets I have seen but two union buttons on drivers. I think we ought to do something with the teamsters while we are here. So far we have not done anything to revive the organization here.

Delegate Cook: I should like to withdraw from the committee appointed to organize the barbers and become one of a committee to organize the teamsters.

President Cohen: The fifteen already appointed can organize everyone else they possibly can while we are in the city.

Delegate Steve Sumner: As teamsters we have already made plans for organizing in this city. We have made arrangements for tomorrow night, and have ordered printed matter which we intend to distribute among the teamsters of the city tomorrow morning. . . . .

Delegate Levine: I should like to know if the Trades and Labor Assembly of this city has arranged for a meeting and invited the unorganized people to attend. In the past it has been customary to have such meetings for the purpose of giving the delegates a chance to speak to the unorganized men. . . . .

President Cohen: I shall appoint all the teamsters' delegates in the convention a committee to look after the organization of the teamsters.

A similar request was made by one of the printers' delegates, who said there was one printing establishment in the city not organized.

President Cohen: I shall appoint all the printers' delegates present a committee to organize that one shop.[1]

The State Federation of Labor had nothing to do with the calling of strikes, but it did help to secure the co-operation and financial assistance of other unions for those in difficulties.[2] Of course, the actual conduct of strikes was almost

[1] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 47–48, 51–52.

[2] The emergency assessment plan for the support of strikes, adopted in 1888 and hardly ever used, was dropped from the constitution of the Federation in 1899. Its place was taken by an article entitled "Strikes and Boycotts" which empowered

always in the hands of some national or international union, though, as former President Wright observes, "Whenever an international came in to organize or had trouble it called on us. We were better acquainted in the state, and many times I could get a settlement where the international could not, because I was known to Illinois people."[1] Federation officers often proceeded to the scene of a dispute to give advice and to help in bringing about an adjustment. This kind of aid was of most importance to local unions outside of the larger cities, for they were not backed by strong city centrals.

In such situations as the Pana affair of 1898, which grew out of the importation of gunmen and negro laborers from the South in an attempt to break a mining strike, the State Federation of Labor took a hand. A special committee from the Decatur convention called on Governor Tanner demanding that he disarm the hired guards then terrorizing the town. They found the Governor inclined to act. He had already declared martial law in Pana, ordering the militia to disarm any and all persons found on the street with firearms. He further assured the labor delegation that the militia had orders "to protect lives and property of the citizens of Pana, but in no wise to aid or assist the operators in operating the mines with imported labor." In appreciation of Governor Tanner's conduct throughout the disturbance the State Federation's delegate introduced a resolution of commendation at the next American Federation of Labor convention.[2] The so-called Tanner Act passed by the legislature in 1899

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the officers to investigate all strikes in the state and, if necessary, to issue an appeal on behalf of the strikers. Notices regarding boycotts and lockouts ("refusal to employ union men in any branch may be construed as a lockout") were to be circulated by the secretary among affiliated unions, and settlement of such cases was to be speedily spread in the same manner.—*Proc.* (1899), p. 39; (1900), pp. 29–30

[1] Interview.

[2] *Proc.* (1898), p. 35; Addendum to *Proc.* (1898); *Proc.* (1899), p. 14; *Decatur Review*, September 30, 1898.

was an outcome of the clashes at Pana and similar troubles at Virden and elsewhere.

In the earlier years of its history, boycotts were brought to the attention of the Federation by representatives of the local or international unions which had declared them and were indorsed almost as a matter of course. Apparently the Federation made no investigation itself when requested to help an affiliated union spread a boycott.[1] With its growth in size, importance, and self-respect, with the announcement of adverse court decisions in boycott cases, and in accordance with the policy of concentration advised by the American Federation of Labor,[2] the Illinois State Federation of Labor adopted a new policy during this period. It began to give its sanction to boycotts less freely, and when it did so the officers or a special committee were often directed to proceed to the scene of the dispute and to make an attempt at settlement.[3] Victor A. Olander, of the Seamen's Union, reminded the delegates in 1912 that the purpose of this "very precious weapon," the boycott, was "not that of punishment, but of forcing settlements in trade disputes, and the big thing we ought to consider at all times is how we can bring about the settlement and in what way the use of the boycott will best bring about the settlement."[4]

This increasing discrimination in the use of the boycott is reflected in the number of boycott resolutions appearing in

[1] Some twenty boycotts received indorsement from the Illinois State Federation of Labor between 1890 and 1898. In none of these did the Federation take very great pains to investigate or to bring about a settlement.

[2] See Laidler, *Boycotts and the Labor Struggle* (New York; John Lane Co., 1914), p. 113.

[3] A boycott resolution came to be couched typically in some such phraseology as, "That the Illinois State Federation of Labor in convention assembled place the said . . . . company on its unfair list *and use every effort to bring about an adjustment in this matter.—Proc.* (1911), 230.

[4] *Proc.* (1912), p. 240.

the proceedings of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. The eight conventions from 1898 to 1905, inclusive, considered more than fifty such resolutions; the conventions from 1906 to 1913, representing many more unions, dealt with about thirty-five boycott proposals. The sessions of 1902 and 1903 indorsed ten and twelve boycotts each; in 1912 only three were adopted; and in 1913 only two.

No convention of the State Federation during this period completed its work without adopting about six resolutions dealing with the union label. The various types of action taken by the State Federation may be grouped under four heads: (1) indorsing and giving publicity to the labels of particular trades, especially to newly adopted labels; (2) defining jurisdiction, that is, stating what labels should appear on certain articles to make them entirely "fair"; (3) denouncing unauthorized labels or imitations; (4) booming the label generally.

Resolutions of the first type were numerous, especially during the years just after 1900, when a great many new organizations and new labels were appearing. The coal-miners, piano-makers, box-makers, broom-makers, brewers, printers, coopers, retail clerks, boot-and shoe-workers, garment-workers, cigar-makers, candy-makers, photo-engravers, bakers, and carpenters all requested, and received, the indorsement of the State Federation for their labels.[1] Some trades brought in resolutions at several different conventions, just to keep their label before organized labor. Typically, these label resolutions recited in the "Whereas" clauses that the union label was the only guaranty of goods produced under "fair" conditions by union men and the only protection against inferior, "scab," or convict-made articles. Sometimes the appeal was put on a different basis—buy

[1] *Proc.* (1898–1913), *passim.*

label goods to aid in the organization of a certain trade or to help win a strike.

While it was the prerogative of the American Federation of Labor to define authoritatively what labels should appear on various products, the pronouncement of the State Federation was frequently sufficient. The 1901 convention decided that the Allied Printing Trades Council label was the proper one for printed matter.[1] Badges and buttons to be strictly union-made must bear the Allied Printing Trades label on the printing, the Sheet Metal Workers' Union label on the sheet metal, and the Jewelry Workers' Union label on those parts of the product within the jurisdiction of that organization.[2] The craft system of organization, with each craft having its own insignia, made the qualifications of a "fair" cigar box even more complicated; it must bear the labels of the Carpenters' Union, the Typographical Union, the Lithographers' and the Paper Makers' Unions, said the original resolution; on requests from the floor, the labels of the Bookbinders' and the Photo-Engravers' Unions were added to these specifications.[3]

A "Knights of Labor" label bobbed up about 1903–4. Certain individuals were said to be enrolling the employees of non-union manufacturing plants in a paper organization and then selling labels to the employer at so much a hundred. Shops using these imitations of union labels had "no scale of prices, no sanitary regulations—in fact . . . . none of the requirements enforced by every trade union deserving the name of labor organization." The officers of the State Federation were directed to co-operate with the unions concerned

[1] At first there had been objection and a motion to substitute "bearing the union label" for "bearing the label of the Allied Printing Trades Council."—*Proc.* (1901), p. 19.

[2] *Proc.* (1908), p. 12; (1911), p. 215.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), p. 213.

in an effort to protect the bona fide labels and to prosecute those who used fakes.[1]

The State Federation helped to "boom the label" in general. The president quite often embodied in his report a paragraph on the theme, "The agitation for union labels must be encouraged and fostered,"[2] and resolutions to the same general effect, often couched in extravagant language, were common. After 1907 every delegate was required to wear union-label clothing if he expected a seat in the convention, and similar rules were urged upon all affiliated unions.[3] In 1909 the "Label Order of Business," as explained in an address by W. A. Olivey, of the United Garment Workers, became a part of the by-laws of the Federation; and delegates were "instructed to have the organizations they represent take the same action."[4]

"Booming the label" is in some respects like flag-waving; now and then its devotees were led by excess of enthusiasm to actions that must have impressed outsiders as rather petty. For example, a telegram from the Illinois Baptist Convention expressing hearty approval of the Federation's laudable efforts to obtain child-labor legislation and better conditions of life and labor for workers everywhere was answered by instruction of the Rockford convention with the notification "that while we appreciated the sentiments ex-

[1] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 42, 46.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 4.

[3] *Proc.* (1907), p. 52; (1908), p. 33.

[4] *Proc.* (1909), p. 192. The "Label Order of Business" consisted of a series of ten questions to be put in union meetings, two at each meeting in rotation. At meeting number one: "All members whose clothing bears the union label will please rise. . . . . All members who insist that union clerks wait on them, please rise."—*Ibid.*, pp. 103–7; also, *Proc.* (1913), p. 112.

pressed, owing to the fact that the telegram was handled by non-union men it could not be officially received."[1]

There was a suggestion during this period that the American Federation of Labor should adopt a universal label to signify "union-made" on any article, no matter by what craft or crafts produced. The Illinois State Federation of Labor took all possible stands on the issue—flat-footed opposition to the universal label in 1900, equally strong indorsement of it in 1906, and a non-committal policy in 1907.[2]

Though the State Federation always recognized the ultimate authority of the American Federation of Labor in such matters, it frequently attempted to settle jurisdictional disputes, to plead the case of one party or the other in the American Federation of Labor, to recommend that charters be issued to new organizations, or to wage battle against those which it considered dual or secessionist. In general, it exerted its influence to preserve harmonious relations between unions.

Sometimes the State Federation convention became a forum for the discussion of trade-union policies in general, and sometimes the Federation made recommendations to its affiliated organizations. In 1903, for example, it advised its members not to incorporate, pointing out that incorporation would expose them to damage suits by employers and would jeopardize not only the union treasury but the property of individual members.[3] When employers launched the first great "open shop" campaign about 1903 the Illinois State Federation affirmed its faith in the "closed" or "union" shop,

[1] *Proc.* (1907), p. 30. Immediately afterward a resolution by the broom-makers was adopted "that we request the management of this Convention . . . . [to] use union labelled brooms in keeping the place clean," instead of the non-labeled product which was then in use.

[2] *Proc.* (1900), p. 16; (1906), p. 23; (1907), p. 30.

[3] *Proc.* (1903), p. 33.

indorsed the American Federation of Labor pronouncement on the subject, and endeavored to counteract the hostile publicity.[1] Trade autonomy and industrial unionism as policies of the labor movement came up for discussion now and then—in 1901, 1907, 1909, 1911, and again in 1913.[2] At the convention of 1913 there was a long and vigorous debate which heralded the controversy that was to play a spectacular rôle during the next period in the Federation's history.

President Wright suggested an interesting development of trade-union policy which he called in his reports "a school for trade unionism." His idea was to bring about the organization of semi-skilled workers by banding them into a state-wide federation with local chairmen, secretaries, and treasurers—"something on the old Knights of Labor principle"—under the control of the Executive Board of the State Federation of Labor. After getting the men acquainted with the principles of trade unionism they were to be divided up among the crafts—carpenters in the carpenters' union, barbers in the barbers' union, and so on. The aim would be "a great state-wide school of trade unionism, from which the graduates will necessarily take their proper places in the recognized craft organizations." But trade jealousy was too strong.[3] The Illinois State Federation approved President Wright's plan unanimously. When it was brought to the attention of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor shortly after (by President Walker, who had succeeded Wright), the council decided that it could not agree to the formation of a state body of directly affiliated local unions, as there were no provisions in the laws of the

[1] *Proc.* (1904), p. 49.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 17; (1907), p. 54; (1909), pp. 111, 112; (1911), p. 201; (1913), pp. 126–36.

[3] Interview, Edwin R. Wright. See *Proc.* (1913), pp. 169–70.

American Federation of Labor for so organizaing workers who belonged under the jurisdiction of international unions. "This is a proposition which the officers of your State Federation would have to take up with the respective international unions in interest and adjust with them."[1]

The State Federation indulged in a wide range of activities which can only be described as "general promotion of unionism." For instance, we should not omit to mention the parades in which the delegates sometimes participated, the song "Stick to Your Union Boys" which President Dold announced had been indorsed by the American Federation of Labor at Kansas City and could be secured for ten cents a copy,[2] addresses by officers of international unions, and recommendations to member organizations that they observe Labor Day with appropriate ceremonies. The Federation indorsed the labor press, and now and then took some measures to encourage it.[3] Federation conventions gave voice to the organized labor opinion of the state upon a great many issues of the day in resolutions designed to influence the opinion of the general public and to arouse trade unionists. Thus, the convention of 1901 charged the Manufacturers' Association with resorting to a spy system; that of 1912 denounced the Taylor system of scientific management; others indorsed John Mitchell's book on organized labor and objected to the derogatory portrayal of organized labor in shows.[4] The Federation listened to speeches on the "McNamara Kidnapping" and other developments growing out of the famous *Los Angeles Times* explosion, and adopted

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 11. *Report of President Walker*, quoting letter from Frank Morrison, secretary, American Federation of Labor.

[2] *Proc.* (1899), pp. 27, 21.

[3] *Proc.* (1901), p. 13; (1904), pp. 53, 62; (1905), p. 36; (1907), p. 53.

[4] *Proc.* (1901), p. 24; (1912), p. 166; (1903), p. 25; (1910), p. 119.

resolutions drawn up by a special committee.[1] It indorsed a "Great Lakes Sailors' Snug Harbor" for disabled and aged seamen and their widows and orphans.[2] It protested against distorted accounts in a Chicago paper of a mine strike in Colorado.[3]

It discussed the possible effects of the newly organized Boy Scout movement from the standpoint of inculcating militarism and subservience to employers.[4] It deplored "the murder of Professor Francisco Ferrer, the great Spanish educator and founder of modern schools in Spain as the most deplorable crime of modern times . . . . . unparalleled since the burning of Giordano Bruno,"[5] and gave a rising vote to the memory of Julia Ward Howe.[6]

This chapter has given some notion in a hasty way of the broad interests of the Federation and its activities not directly related to legislative work. To summarize, we find its non-legislative activities to include (1) organization; (2) co-operation in strikes and lockouts; (3) indorsement and publication of boycotts; (4) promotion of the union label; (5) endeavors to maintain harmonious relations between unions; (6) discussion of union policies; and (7) general promotion of trade unionism.

[1] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 18, 20, 130 ff., 158–59.

[2] *Proc.* (1903), p. 56.

[3] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 87 f.

[4] *Proc.* (1912).

[5] *Proc.* (1909), pp. 176–77, resolution by Adolph Germer.

[6] *Proc.* (1910), p. 121.

CHAPTER XIII

LEGISLATIVE METHODS, 1898–1913

Probably the most important development in the Federation's legislative activities during this period is to be found in the improvement of its lobbying system. It had been accustomed to send its Legislative Committee to Springfield during the biennial sessions of the General Assembly when the treasury permitted, but the expense was considerable and the Federation, prior to this period, had been poor. Even as late as 1903 President Menche reported that it had been possible to maintain only part of the Legislative Committee at the capital, and that just at the crucial point in the session the president had found it necessary to leave Springfield and make a hasty appeal to local unions for funds.[1] As the financial condition of the Federation improved, however, especially after the miners began paying dues in 1908, the organization was able to keep its president, its secretary, and such members of the Legislative Committee as were needed, on the job continuously.[2]

During the legislative session of 1905, and at the suggestion of William G. Edens, who headed the Illinois State

[1] *Proc.* (1903), p. 7.

[2] President Wright in 1911 explained the system then in use: "The executive board and the officers of your organization meet thirty days previous to the convention of the Legislature and select three officers to attend. . . . ." Then, "no member of the legislative committee is called to Springfield until there is work for him to do. If a bill comes up that is of interest to the women, for instance, a woman is called there, and while she may not be on the committee, we recognize her as a specialist in women's work. A measure of interest to the cigarmakers, say, comes up. The committee may not have a cigarmaker on it, but when that measure comes up the committee selects a cigarmaker of experience in his line. He comes down and a member of the executive board steps out. . . . ."—*Proc.* (1911), p. 222; also see *Proc.* (1909), p. 188, Article X of Constitution.

Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, President Cohen called a conference of all the representatives of labor organizations then engaged in promoting labor measures before committees of the General Assembly. They met at the state capitol on March 22. President Cohen and Secretary Morris, of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, were present, and with them met J. J. Sonsteby and George W. Geary, of the Chicago Federation of Labor; W. P. Sheehan, of the Order of Railway Conductors; T. J. McKiernan, Richard Tippett, Alexander Suttie, and William E. Welsh from the United Mine Workers of Illinois; William G. Edens, of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; David C. Ross, the commissioner of labor; and Representative Samuel J. Drew, of Will County. A Joint Labor Conference Board was formed, and the members decided to meet daily or as often as necessary throughout the remainder of the session in order to co-ordinate the interests of organized labor. Barney Cohen became the chairman and J. J. Sonsteby the secretary of the labor conference.[1]

Owing to the unity of efforts thus inaugurated, this "third house," as it was dubbed, "became an institution of marked influence and prestige." Barney Cohen said,

> Members of either House evinced not only readiness but courtesy in attending our sessions whenever they were requested to do so; and although we were not entirely successful in procuring all the new legislation at which we aimed, we were at least rewarded for our co-operative spirit by finding ourselves able to block nearly every scheme put forward by the capitalists' lobby. . . . .[2]

A glimpse of the activities of the labor conference is afforded by the following excerpts from Mr. William G. Eden's report[3] to his brotherhood:

[1] *Report of the Illinois State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen*, January 11 to May 13, 1905; furnished to the writer by William G. Edens.

[2] *Proc.* (1905), p. 9.

[3] Cited above.

At the conference on March 23, the Saturday half-holiday bill applying to the City of Chicago only, and a bill relating to metal polishers, were endorsed. Mention was made of an attempt to repeal the convict labor law, which the conference opposed, as it did Bill No. 407, introduced by Senator McElvain of Jackson County, amending the law regarding garnishment. . . . . An expression of sympathy was voted the Chicago City firemen in their effort to have their pension bill equalized.

March 24, the conference considered my report on the pending insurance bills as they affect fraternal societies. . . . .

I was authorized to invite Representative M. L. McKinley of Cook County to appear before the conference on Wednesday, March 29, at nine o'clock A. M., to explain the provisions of his Bill No. 488, known as the "anti-trust" bill. . . . .

At a conference . . . . April 7, 1905, there appeared a committee consisting of Miss Anna Nicholes, chairman of the Industrial Committee of State Federation of Women's Clubs; Miss Mary E. McDowell, president of the Illinois Women's Trade Union League; Mrs. Harriet Van der Vaart, secretary of Illinois branch of the Consumers' League, protesting against the proposed amendments to the child labor law. As a result of the conference the following resolution was adopted by the legislative representatives of organized labor. . . . .

A similar joint labor conference board met regularly throughout each legislative session after 1905,[1] until the co-operative spirit was temporarily destroyed by disagreements within the ranks of organized labor over employers' liability and workmen's compensation bills. Each organization represented in the conference compiled its own legislative report, however. There was no joint report until the organization of the Illinois Joint Labor Legislative Board in 1913.[2]

If its lobbying efforts were to meet with success in the legislature the State Federation was under the necessity of making its influence felt in the elections. There were three political policies which it had pursued in the past: (1) the

[1] Edwin R. Wright, interview. Wright says it also met before 1905, but it does not appear to have been formally organized until that year.

[2] T. J. McCarthy, interview.

policy of old-party alliance, generally with the Democrats; (2) the policy of independent political action, through a Labor party; (3) the American Federation of Labor policy of "elect your friends and defeat your enemies," applied to individual candidates regardless of party. In the period from 1898 to 1913 the third of these was followed exclusively.[1]

The lobbying, non-partisan, "elect your friends and defeat your enemies" policy of the American Federation of Labor was the political method of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. But how was labor to know its friends from its enemies?

The first few conventions of this period took refuge in the device of recommending the election of union men—men with "union cards in their pockets and union principles in their hearts"; while President O'Brien remarked that "as a general proposition . . . . wage earners will make no mistake in voting against lawyers."[2] These were crude methods of classification, at best.

In 1903 the Federation came very near to taking an important forward step when the Legislative Committee reported the names of the outstanding friends and enemies of organized labor in the last General Assembly. The list was short, and it was removed from the report entirely by vote of the convention. One delegate said, "It surprises me that anyone should spring such a thing as a roll of honor on us at this time. I should like to know what entitles these men to a roll of honor. They were pledged to the people who elected

[1] There were unsuccessful attempts, usually led by miners, to commit the Federation to independent political action once more and to persuade it to form a Labor party. The strongest effort was made in 1910–11 when the convention adopted a resolution by John H. Walker providing for a referendum vote on the Labor party question. Only seventy unions voted, and these the total number of votes for a Labor party was 1,795, while there were 3,154 ballots cast in opposition.—*Proc.* (1910), pp. 97 f.; (1911), p. 22.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 4.

them to do what they did."[1] The party-workers in the convention of this era doubtless hindered the presentation of unbiased reports on the labor records of legislators.

So the Federation continued to pass resolutions indorsing "all candidates who are known to be favorable to organized labor,"[2] without providing any means by which the trade unionist might know which candidates were favorable and which unfavorable—until 1907. In that year, inspired no doubt by the example of the American Federation of Labor, which was conducting a spirited campaign inaugurated by its political manifesto of 1906,[3] the convention directed its officers to print "friendly lists" and "unfriendly lists" of legislators, based on their actions and votes in the General Assembly.[4] In subsequent years the Federation sent out the records of state legislators one month prior to election, distributed in its conventions copies of roll call votes on important measures, and instructed its secretary to maintain an information bureau with the past records of all legislative candidates.[5] Now and then questionnaires were sent to candidates, asking them to define their positions on certain issues, but this method was not extensively applied to state legislators.[6] Occasionally the Federation selected a few members of the legislature who had strongly opposed

[1] *Proc.* (1903), p. 42.

[2] *Proc.* (1906), p. 22.

[3] This manifesto was indorsed by the Illinois State Federation of Labor in 1906.—*Proc.* (1906), p. 14.

[4] *Proc.* (1907), p. 17.

[5] *Proc.* (1908), p. 14; (1911), p. 167; (1912), p. 257; (1913), p. 125.

[6] In 1904 questionnaires were sent to congressional candidates; the issues brought forward were the eight-hour day on government contracts and anti-injunction legislation.—*Proc.* (1904), p. 81. At the request of the American Federation of Labor, questionnaires were sent to state and national legislative candidates in 1906. The questions raised related to the injunction, the eight-hour day on government contracts, and the initiative and referendum.—*Proc.* (1906), pp. 15–20.

labor measures and carried the fight against them into their districts when time came for re-election.[1]

As a result of urging from the American Federation of Labor, the labor movement of Illinois increased its political activities after 1906. In 1908, at the suggestion of a Political Action Committee of the Chicago Federation of Labor, the State Federation called a special conference of city central bodies to consider how labor might turn the new primary law of Illinois to its advantage in the approaching elections.[2] This conference met at Springfield on Sunday, June 21, 1908, with eighty-six delegates in attendance, from twenty-six cities. Its Committee on Primary Law recommended that members of organized labor exercise great care in signing petitions for places on primary ballots, that the officers of the State Federation prepare and publish a digest of the new primary law so far as it might affect organized labor, that proper steps be taken in the different districts to organize union men into precinct committees under the direction of the city central bodies, and that the State Federation officers write to the attorney general for an opinion on that section of the law defending the qualifications of a voter at the primary and his privilege of declaring his party affiliation. A Committee on Resolutions urged the nomination and election of union men, or men favorable to labor measures, and reiterated the protests of labor against the injunction, demanding trial by jury in contempt cases. A Committee on Candidates asked John Mitchell, the able and recently retired leader of the United Mine Workers, to permit the use of his name as a candidate for governor in the Democratic primaries. When a committee called upon Mitchell, however, he declined to run. Ill health and a wish to promote peace in the industrial field by directing the work of the

[1] Edwin R. Wright, interview.

[2] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes" June 7, 1908.

Trade Agreement Department of the National Civic Federation were his reasons.[1] So the movement to inaugurate the new primary law by using it to place a great labor leader in the governor's chair fell through.

The most characteristic and successful device for bringing about the enactment of labor legislation during the latter part of this period, particularly while Edwin R. Wright was president of the State Federation of Labor and Deneen was governor of Illinois, was the commission method. The Health, Safety and Comfort Act (1909), the Occupational Disease Law (1911), and the Workmen's Compensation Act (1911) were each secured after extended investigations by an official state commission representing the viewpoints of labor, employers, and experts. These commissions uncovered facts, threshed out issues of policy, and presented reports to the legislature containing agreed drafts of bills. This not only relieved that body of the necessity for hammering out measures on difficult subjects under the cross-fire of hostile lobbies, but also had a powerful effect in rallying public opinion to the support of needed labor legislation.

The advantage of the commission method of promoting labor legislation, as explained by former President Edwin R. Wright, is twofold. In the first place, investigation by a state commission prepares the public mind for the type of legislation required. "Governor Deneen used to tell us," says Wright, "that 'you can't enact or enforce legislation until there is a demand for it. You fellows have got to create the demand for it.' Joint commissions helped us to create this demand." In the second place, "All the legislation that the State Federation has secured has been a compromise with the employers," and the idea of the commission method is "to go as far with the employers as you can before you start

[1] *Ibid.*, July 5, 1908, "Report of Political Action Committee" and "Report of Delegates to State Federation of Labor's Special Conference."

fighting them. Most employers will go a long way; why start fighting them from scratch?"[1]

The State Federation of Labor participated officially and placed its seal of approval upon the commission method of forwarding labor measures when in 1908 it decided to provide compensation for the labor members of a commission appointed by Governor Deneen.[2] In 1910 and 1911 the salaries and expenses received from the state by President Wright and Secretary Morris for their services on the commission which framed the Workmen's Compensation Act were turned back into the treasury of the Federation, and they received their regular salaries.[3]

[1] Edwin R. Wright, interview. Mr. Wright concludes from his experience as a member of the commissions that drafted the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Health, Safety and Comfort Act that "Most employers are not as bad as they are painted, when you get together with them." Many times the better employers are simply ignorant of the need for legislation; they tend to judge conditions everywhere by the high standards in their own plants. When such men serve on a commission and look into things for themselves they often withdraw their opposition. For example, on the commission which drew the Health, Safety and Comfort Law the representatives of the employers said at first, "Such legislation isn't necessary; come and look at our factories." "We did," says ex-president Wright, "and there wasn't much we could criticise. Then we said, 'Come with us,' and we showed them some of the worst places. The employers on the commission admitted that they had never known that such places existed. Then they helped us to get rid of them, and perhaps did even more than we did."

[2] "Inasmuch as this commission is expected to work without compensation we believe it is the duty of the State Federation to provide compensation for the members thereof representing labor, said compensation to be the same as paid organizers of the State Federation."—"Report of Committee on Officers' Reports," adopted, *Proc.* (1908), p. 32.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), p. 12.

CHAPTER XIV

AN EARLY PURPOSE ACHIEVED (CONVICT LABOR)

One of the chief incentives which led to the Seamen's Hall Convention of 1884 and the founding of the Illinois State Federation of Labor had been the desire to do away with the ruinous competition from convicts felt by free craftsmen in certain trades. At the opening of the twentieth century the convict-labor problem still remained unsolved, and during the first half of the period 1898–1913 it continued to be the subject of a greater number of reports and more discussion in the annual conventions than any other topic considered by the State Federation of Labor. The solution finally reached, embodied in statutes of 1903 and 1905, and applied in administrative agreements between the State Board of Prison Industries and Federation officials, while perhaps not entirely satisfactory to organized labor, may be reckoned one of the leading achievements in the legislative program of this period.

Governor Altgeld's administration had made an honest effort to obey the constitutional amendment of 1886, but after his retirement the contract system of convict labor ran on under the thinly veiled disguise of a "piece-price" plan. Manufacturers contracted for "the labor and skill of not less than 200 prisoners" at an agreed price for each article turned out; but if the total should not come to "the sum of fifty cents per day for each inmate employed," then the manufacturer would pay as rental for the shops and facilities a sum sufficient to make the earnings of each prisoner fifty cents a day, "but nothing herein shall be considered as a letting by contract for the labor of such prisoners."[1] "It is

[1] An actual contract quoted by Attorney General Hamlin in an official opinion rendered in 1902, printed in *Proc.* (1902), p. 5.

no secret," reported President O'Brien in 1901, "that the convicts are manufacturing under contract, boots and shoes, harness, chairs, brooms, mattresses and other articles."[1]

No wonder that the workers in the trades affected by this ruinous competition continued to complain. Whenever they demanded some slight share in the prosperity then prevailing they were told by employers that owing to the use of convict labor the prices of their products were depreciated from 20 to 40 per cent, and so long as this competition remained it would be impossible to comply with their requests. President O'Brien, in a letter to Governor Yates, stated that "the representatives of one large industry, employing more than a thousand men, informed us that if the competition of convict labor was withdrawn they would willingly advance the wages of their employes 10 per cent."[2]

But the problem was what should be done with the labor of convicts. It would be demoralizing and inhumane to keep them idle; it was desirable to have them earn their own keep so far as possible; yet their products ought not to sell on the market at prices which would undercut the wages of honest labor. For a time the State Federation thought that New York had solved the problem in its "state-use" system, adopted in 1897, and it advocated a similar law for Illinois.[3] But when the General Assembly authorized an investigating committee to study the operation of the New York plan it returned a unanimous unfavorable report, this in spite of the fact that five of the six members of the commission were said to have been favorably disposed toward the New York law at the start. "It was found that the first year of its operation kept the prisoners well employed, but at the end of that time all demands were filled and the prisoners were in idleness, the

[1] *Proc.* (1901), p. 5.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 5.

[3] *Proc.* (1898), p. 6; (1899), p. 40; (1900), p. 15.

state not being allowed to turn their labor into other channels."[1]

This made it necessary for the State Federation to adopt a new program, and after several conferences of its officials with the various interests concerned, a new bill providing for the employment of convicts in the preparation of material for public roads was drawn up and presented to the 1901 legislature. It failed to pass.[2]

Having been defeated in the legislature, the Executive Board of the Federation determined to seek the abolition of contract convict labor by administrative authority. President O'Brien made an investigation of the methods in use at the state penal institutions, secured the written opinion of an attorney that they were clearly illegal in the light of the constitutional amendment of 1886, and submitted the whole matter to Governor Yates, suggesting that he take the initiative in correcting the abuses that admittedly existed. "No action of your administration would meet with more general approval or be more likely to gain for you the good wishes of the wage-earners of the state," the governor was told.[3] A committee authorized by the convention of 1901 met with the governor, prison officials, and a like committee from the Manufacturers' Association and presented the demands of the State Federation of Labor: first, to abolish the convict contract labor system within ninety days; second, to remove all of the labor saving machinery and to give more time for educational purposes. But after talking the matter over, the labor representatives had to agree to refer the entire question to the legislature at its next session,

[1] *Proc.* (1901), p. 5; Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 143. W. D. Ryan of the Mine Workers represented the viewpoint of labor on the commission.

[2] *Proc.* (1901), p. 5.

[3] "Report of President O'Brien," *Proc.* (1901), pp. 5–6.

for existing appropriations were sufficient to run the prisons only on the system that had been in use for many years.[1]

Accordingly, it was decided that a new bill should be drafted, and after four conferences President Menche reported: "When the next legislature meets we will be prepared with a bill which we feel confident will harmonize all the various interests and be just to all. In the passage of this measure we will have the earnest and hearty co-operation of the Governor, as well as of all of the prison officials." At the request of the Federation, the governor and the penitentiary commissioners agreed that they would not enter into any new contracts until the legislature had had time to act.[2]

With this encouragement the Federation redoubled its efforts. At the conference with state officials it was decided to institute a lawsuit in order to get an expression from the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the contracts then in use.[3] At the request of President Menche and Secretary Morris the governor secured an opinion on the subject from Attorney-General Hamlin; the opinion stated that the existing contracts were plainly unconstitutional. By correspondence and speeches they "kept this question continually before the unions" and planks on convict labor were demanded, and obtained, from both the Republican and Democratic state conventions. The subject of convict labor overshadowed all others in the State Federation of Labor meeting in 1902.[4]

[1] "Report of President Menche," *Proc.* (1902), p. 4.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[3] For reasons "best known to himself" the member of the legislature who was to begin the suit did not do so.—*Ibid.*

[4] In addition to the lengthy report of President Menche quoted from above, there was a report by Z. T. Trumbo of the Executive Board on the manufacturing carried on at Pontiac reformatory, and several resolutions of the usual kind.—*Ibid.*, pp. 4 f., 9, 31 f.

As a result of all this agitation, the General Assembly of 1903 passed a new Convict Labor Law.

In the words of Mr. David Ross, Secretary of the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, the new Illinois law was "the most advanced legislation of the kind anywhere on record." It created a Board of Prison Industries composed of various prison officials of the state, whose duties were to attend to the disposition of all the products manufactured by the prisoners. All such products were to be disposed of to state institutions and to political divisions of the state. The Board was particularly charged with the duty of seeing that none of the prison products were sold in the open market, or in competition with the products of free labor. The contract system was prohibited, and all prison labor contractors were required to remove their property from the prisons.[1]

There was a battle royal to put the new statute into operation. First there were rumors that certain prison officials were conspiring to make it unworkable, and when the governor assured the State Federation's Executive Board that the law would go into effect on the first day of July, 1904, as the legislature had prescribed, prison contractors came forward and attempted to tie his hands with injunctions.[2]

The Board of Prison Industries finally decided upon the industries to be undertaken in the penal institutions. These comprised printing, wood-working, brick-making, and the manufacture of clothing, school furniture, iron beds, springs and mattresses, brooms, shoes, cut stone, and material for public buildings. "When the above distribution of industries was made known," lamented President Cohen, of the State Federation, "I received protests from the following organizations: Printers, Wood-workers, Brickmakers and Clothing Workers."[3] No trade wished to have its type of work carried on in the prisons, though all admitted that the

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

[2] *Proc.* (1904), p. 19.

[3] *Proc.* (1904), p. 26.

prisoners must work at something. A special committee appointed by the Federation recommended that the employment of inmates should be spread over as many trades as possible so that none would be ruinously affected; that only raw material be purchased by the state for manufacturing purposes; that no machinery other than hand- or foot-power be used when the finished product could be produced by such means; and that crushed stone for the making of roads be given the preference in honoring requisitions.[1]

In 1905 the trade unions lost a point. The movement for repeal of the 1903 act and for the passage of a bill to establish a large printing plant at Joliet was so strong that the State Federation's officials had to compromise.[2] In order to avert actual repeal they agreed to an amendment that not to exceed 40 per cent of the inmates of penal institutions might be put to manufacturing goods for the open market, such goods to be sold as near as possible to the current market prices and not to be produced until the needs of state institutions had been fully supplied.[3]

A report of President Cohen in 1906 which commended the prison officials for their execution of the law was branded as "whitewash"; several delegates demanded to be recorded as voting against its approval, and a special Committee on

[1] *Proc.* (1904), p. 70.

[2] County, municipal, and township officials were dissatisfied under the 1903 law because of the long delay when supplies were ordered from the Board of Prison Industries; the board itself was dissatisfied because it had to handle a large number of small orders from these officials.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 146. The ousted prison contractors were dissatisfied because they had lost their source of cheap labor, and they were "bending every energy to make the law unpopular." President Cohen felt that the wardens were trying to make it unworkable. "They locked the men in their cells with nothing to do," he says, "and the newspapers blamed the resulting conditions on organized labor, whereas the wardens were at fault."—Interview, Barney Cohen.

[3] *Proc.* (1905), p. 13; Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

Penal Institutions was chosen, by election, to investigate.[1] It reported that while some of the things done by the officials were commendable, not all their actions could be indorsed—notably the introduction of improved machinery to produce goods for the open market and the concentration of most of the labor in one industry.[2]

Chicago Federation delegates came instructed to seek the repeal of the "40 per cent clause," which they asserted had been "misinterpreted and misapplied to an outrageous extent." The matter was referred to the Executive Board,[3] but the next convention (1907) decided that "no permanent relief can be secured without the repeal of the 40 per cent clause and the return to the law of 1903." Actual production figures showed, the Convict Labor Committee declared, that more than 65 per cent of the output of prison employment was being sold on the open market in spite of the law.[4]

The objectives of the State Federation on convict-labor legislation were laid down by this committee as follows: (1) to secure the repeal of the 40 per cent clause; (2) to secure an amendment to make the Convict Labor Law applicable to all penal institutions in the state, including county and municipal prisons; (3) to secure a law for the marking of all prison products with the label "Prison Made"; and (4) to secure the co-operation of the National Prison Association and other organizations toward uniform laws governing convict labor throughout the United States.[5] In 1908 three supplementary recommendations were approved: (5) to secure a national law prohibiting interstate commerce in prison-made products; (6) to co-operate with other state

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 1906; *Proc.* (1906), p. 9.

[2] *Proc.* (1906), p. 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[4] *Proc.* (1907), p. 66.

[5] *Ibid.*

federations of labor to bring about uniformity of action on the convict-labor problem; and (7) to secure the immediate building of a new penal institution.[1] As the automobile came into use the State Federation advocated (8) highway construction as an outlet for prison labor, and in 1913 the Tice Good Roads Bill was passed with a companion measure authorizing the use of convicts on roadwork under certain conditions. President Wright reported that this would probably "solve one of the problems of prison work."[2]

Though none of these legislative objectives, except that pertaining to road construction, were attained, and though the law of 1905 remained unchanged, the Federation did succeed in removing practically all just cause of complaint over convict-labor competition by direct negotiation with the administrative authorities. A written understanding was reached with the Board of Prison Industries in May, 1909, by which the board was to "eliminate from the prisons those industries that competed with free labor in the open market." The shirt factory in Joliet and the overall factory in Pontiac were both discontinued on January 1, 1911. This stopped the sale on the open market of about one and one-half million shirts and one million overalls annually. "There is now left in our prisons only the making of brooms, reed and rattan chairs, and a few other small lines," said President Wright. "The Federation has secured the discontinuance of cigar-making, cooperage, leather working, molding, and a dozen other lines of employment, and the substitution of work for state account." Enforcement of the general understanding

[1] *Proc.* (1908), p. 31.

[2] *Proc.* (1909), p. 142; (1910), p. 96; (1912), p. 254; (1913), pp. 30, 38. It is interesting to speculate on what would have been the attitude of the State Federation had there been in existence a strong union of common and semi-skilled laborers claiming jurisdiction over highway construction.

with the board was deemed sufficient to eliminate, to a large extent, the necessity for legislation.[1]

President Wright surveyed the situation with satisfaction in 1912.

Illinois was one of the first states to abolish the contract system, and substitute state-account work. The lock step and prison stripes were discarded about the same time. We have not made a cigar, pair of shoes, or a set of harness for the open market in a number of years. Shirts and overalls, formerly turned out by the thousands of dozens, have gone to the discard. A thousand acres of land has been purchased near Joliet and soon the prison will be moved to the new site. The southern penitentiary has a large farm and works many convicts in the open air. Crushed stone is now produced in large quantities at each prison and the present movement for road building will, we hope, close the last of the prison shops.[2]

As Mr. Wright observed, the complaints of working-men regarding the effects of cheap prison labor began to receive real attention about the same time that the lock step and the prison stripe were being discarded. Organized labor owed much of its success on the issue of convict competition to the general movement for prison reform. It was appropriate, therefore, that having succeeded in its long campaign for relief of its own grievances the State Federation of Labor lent its aid to promote an enlightened public opinion on the treatment of criminals. A remarkably sane and progressive report of its Committee on Prison Labor in 1911 committed the Federation to the modern policy of attempt at cure, not punishment, in penal institutions.[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 211, 16–17.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), p. 28.

[3] *Proc.* (1911). p, 212.

CHAPTER XV

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY OR WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION?[1]

From the first year of its history, the Illinois State Federation of Labor had demanded legislative restriction of the common-law defenses available to employers in industrial accident cases, and in the period 1898–1913 the agitation for a change in the law grew much stronger. Nearly every convention of the Federation discussed the subject in some form or other. At first its efforts were directed along the old lines —limitation of the common-law defenses of assumption of risk, contributory negligence, and the fellow-servant rule— and a statutory Employers' Liability Law was the object. About 1910, however, the Federation allied itself with the more modern movement for handling the monetary compensation for industrial accidents as a problem of insurance, and it led the forces of labor in securing the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1911 and the amended act of 1913.

The platform of the Illinois State Federation of Labor adopted at Bloomington in 1898 carried in full a draft of the employers' liability bill which the Federation then favored. It proposed to make the employer liable for damages due to any defect in construction of his plant or equipment or to the

[1] In order to avoid duplication of the excellent detailed account of legislation on this subject contained in Beckner's *History of Illinois Labor Legislation*, the section which follows will be rather narrowly restricted to activities of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. Beckner takes up in detail the various types of legislation proposed; the difference of opinion over the preferability of employers' liability of workmen's compensation and the reasons for the adoption of the latter; the work of the official and the voluntary commissions; and the actual provisions of the Illinois laws of 1911, 1913, and after. Therefore, these topics are treated in summary fashion and the reader is referred to chapter xii of Beckner's work.

negligence of any person in his employ; he would not be liable, however, if the injured person knew of the defect or negligence and failed to report it within a reasonable time.[1] In 1899 the Federation demanded the passage of an employers' liability act "and the enforcement of the said act by leaving the amount subject to the verdict of a jury."[2]

But efforts to move the General Assembly to action were unsuccessful. The Legislative Committee reported in 1903 that "H.B. 313, by Drew, known as 'Agents' Liability Act,' died in house and did not pass second reading."[3] In 1905 the "Fellow Servant Bill" fared no better. President Barney Cohen remarked to the convention that opposition to their bill was secret but powerful.[4]

When all efforts for legislation of this type again came to naught in the 1907 General Assembly the Federation couched its protest in vigorous language. The President and other officers were instructed "to give their untiring and unceasing efforts" in behalf of the enactment of "a good, substantial employers' liability law that will guarantee the rights of workers to recover damages for injury or death, resulting through the negligence of an employer or fellow employe." Furthermore,

> a record of the progress of the bill after being introduced shall be kept by the President and Secretary and a full report as to the action and attitude of the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the vote of each member in committee, in the House and Senate shall be kept in full detail and submitted to the next convention of this Federation of Labor.[5]

Once more, in 1909, the liability bill failed in the legislature, partly because the forces of organized labor were not

[1] *Proc.* (1898), p. 44. The same bill had been indorsed in 1897.—*Ibid.*, p. 6.

[2] *Proc.* (1899), p. 21.

[3] *Proc.* (1903), p. 9.

[4] *Proc.* (1905), p. 14. See also *Proc.* (1906), p. 9.

[5] *Proc.* (1908), pp. 13, 25.

able to work in concert. For one thing, the representatives of the railroad brotherhoods did not lend their support,[1] and the other labor lobbyists were not able to agree as to which of numerous bills should be passed. Representatives of the Chicago Federation advocated one type of measure; representatives of the State Federation favored another.[2]

In the meantime workmen's compensation had been coming to the fore. As far back as 1905 the Illinois legislature had created an Industrial Insurance Commission to formulate a plan for industrial insurance and workingmen's old-age pensions; this commission, having no funds for an extensive investigation, confined its inquiries to accident insurance.[3] It submitted two bills, the first based on the German plan of compulsory accident insurance, and the second—which was the bill introduced into the General Assembly—a voluntary insurance scheme to be sustained by contributions from employers and employees. The members of the commission realized from the beginning that their functions were chiefly educational and that neither employers nor employees were prepared for immediate action; they were not surprised when the legislature failed to adopt their recommendations. "The trade union representatives openly

[1] "I would like to say," remarked President Wright to the 1909 convention, "that I sent a very bitter letter of protest against the actions of some of the railroad men at the last session of the Illinois legislature."—*Proc.* (1909), p. 11.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] The commission was created after the defeat of an employers' liability bill sponsored by organized labor. Friends of the insurance movement, Professor Charles R. Henderson among them, secured its passage. The creation of this commission was not even mentioned in the State Federation's legislative discussion at the next convention.

The members of the commission were: Charles H. Hulburd, a business manager, president; Professor Charles R. Henderson, secretary; Professor David Kinley; Adolph E. Adeloff, a representative of the trade unions; Harrison F. Jones, a lawyer and administrator of a railroad insurance scheme.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

opposed the bill in the committee hearings and elsewhere; they were sent there with a mandate to kill the proposed law and to urge action for protective legislation and a liability law."[1]

In the fall of 1909 interest in legislation relating to industrial accidents received a tremendous impetus. A great mine disaster at Cherry, Illinois, resulted in the loss of 259 lives, and the state was appalled. A special session of the legislature, called by Governor Deneen,[2] authorized an Em-

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 437. Professor Henderson concluded that their antagonism to this and other insurance schemes was due to the following causes:

"1. Trade unionists had not had time to consider the methods of insurance and they had from some source acquired some distorted notions of what insurance meant.

"2. The workingmen had been trained to look to the liability law for their legal rights in cases of injury. The law itself and the procedure of the courts had taught them almost instinctively to take a combative attitude.

"3. They had been taught by the common law and the procedure under it to look to and fight for large speculative awards from juries and courts. They had not fully comprehended the fact that only a small part of the accidents in industry were due to negligence of the employer, and that it was seldom that a workman could recover large damages.

"4. They felt that the commission's measure fell short of the best European laws. . . . .

"5. It was possible that the trade unions feared that the bill would weaken attachment to the unions, but Professor Henderson did not personally come in contact with this argument.

"6. Perhaps the most decisive factor in determining the trade unions to oppose the commission's bill was their concentrated effort to secure protective laws. The commission attempted to convince the union leaders that accident insurance laws, by requiring benefits without regard to proof of negligence in all cases of injury, would bring pressure to bear upon employers to use devices for reducing the number and severity of accidents; but the unionists, intent on one single point, persisted in regarding the proposed bill as a rival to their own."—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 438, summarizing Charles R. Henderson, "Workingmen's Insurance in Illinois," *Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the American Association for Labor Legislation* (1907), pp. 69–84.

[2] The Illinois Branch of the American Association for Labor Legislation, through its president, Professor Ernst Freund, had requested the governor to include the creation of a commission to investigate the problem of compensation

ployers' Liability Commission, whose duties would be to investigate the problem of industrial accidents, the present condition of the law of liability for injuries or death in Illinois and in other states or countries, and to inquire into the most equitable and effectual method of providing compensation for such losses.[1] President Wright, of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, became secretary of this commission; the other labor members were George Golden, Patrick Carr, M. J. Boyle, Daniel J. Gorman, and John Flora.[2]

The commission made a thorough study of the industrial accident situation in Illinois under the existing law; investigated the operation of employers' liability laws and the newer workmen's compensation laws elsewhere; and conducted numerous public hearings. The results of its investigations convinced a majority of the commission that the insurance principle embodied in a workmen's compensation act would provide a better solution of the accident problem than any amount of tinkering with the liability laws, and it prepared to submit such a report to the legislature, though it could not agree on the details of a bill. M. J. Boyle and John Flora, two labor members of the commission supported in their views by the Chicago Federation of Labor, held out for an employers' liability statute and insisted that this must come first.

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for industrial accidents in his call. The bill creating the commission was drafted by Professor Freund and carried an appropriation of $10,000.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 440.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The representatives of the employers were I. G. Rawn, chairman, Charles Piez (elected chairman after the death of Mr. Rawn), Mason B. Starring, Robert E. Conway, E. T. Bent, P. A. Peterson, and W. J. Jackson (elected to succeed Mr. Rawn.)—Employers' Liability Commission, *Report* (1910), Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

The controversy over the relative merits of employers' liability and workmen's compensation was "the absorbing issue of the convention"[1] when the State Federation met at Rock Island in 1910. President Wright, himself a member of the commission, stood for a compensation act; and Secretary Nockels, of the Chicago Federation of Labor, was reported to have come down to the convention to line up the delegates in opposition to him. But the miners and other downstate delegates were solidly behind Wright.[2]

In the convention Wright favored both improvements in the liability law and a compensation act, and the convention endeavored to conciliate the hostile groups by providing for a committee to decide upon an "adequate and comprehensive Liability and Compensation bill." When drafted, it was to be submitted for ratification or rejection to the member organizations, and if indorsed by a majority of them it would be urged in the next General Assembly by organized labor.[3] Acting under these instructions, the State Federation officers submitted a proposed workmen's compensation act and also the draft of an employers' liability bill which had been drawn for the Illinois State Federation of Labor several years earlier and subsequently indorsed by the American Federation of Labor. Both measures were approved.[4]

[1] *Chicago Tribune*, August 26, 1910, quoted by Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

[2] *Ibid.* Raymond Robins, who had been invited in to speak to the convention, came out in favor of workmen's compensation. If you simply take away the old common-law defenses, said he, you merely give a right of action. If a man has a good lawyer and fights through to the Supreme Court he may get more money than could be secured under a compensation act; but the number of workmen who can do that is small, and the average amount of return that comes to the whole group would be less than under a uniform compensation act. "If what you want is the largest amount of money for the actual sufferers in the shortest amount of time, not for one man to get a big pile and others nothing," then favor a compensation law.—*Proc.* (1910), pp. 38–39.

[3] *Proc.* (1910), p. 107.

[4] *Proc.* (1911), p. 14, "Report of President Wright."

Since the official Employers' Liability Commission had been unable to agree on a specific draft for a compensation measure a "voluntary commission" was assembled just prior to the legislative session, and it succeeded in producing an agreed bill for the consideration of the General Assembly. The personnel of this "voluntary commission" was the same as that of the official one, except that James F. Morris, secretary of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and T. K. Ball, of Springfield, were invited on recommendation of President Wright to take the places of John Flora and M. J. Boyle, the two labor members who held out with the Chicago Federation of Labor for employers' liability.[1] Thereupon the Chicago Federation served notice upon Governor Deneen that "this Federation will not be bound by any action of the commission appointed by President Wright of the Illinois State Federation of Labor," and sent its Legislative Committee to Springfield "to devote their time and efforts in having the American Federation of Labor form of an employers' liability law enacted and to prevent as far as possible the enactment of a workmen's compensation law or employers' liability law that has not been endorsed by the Chicago Federation of Labor."[2]

As the session progressed, President Wright obtained the indorsement of the American Federation of Labor, through its Executive Council, for the workmen's compensation bill which he favored, and he also promised that full responsibility for it would be borne by himself and President Walker, of the Illinois Miners; but the Chicago Federation of Labor replied that its committee "has its commission and shall abide by it until otherwise instructed."[3]

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

[2] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," December 20, 1910, January 15, 1911.

[3] *Ibid.*, March 19, 1911.

President John Fitzpatrick, of the Chicago Federation, wrote to Chairman John O'Neill, of the Legislative Committee, to "make it clear to the members of the House and Senate that real bona fide labor organizations in Cook County are absolutely and totally opposed to any legislation regarding compensation at this time and until such time as we have an adequate Employers' Liability bill enacted in this state." He continued:

> The bill . . . . is a denial to the workman of the amount he should receive in case of injury, or that which his dependents shall receive in case of death. It sets up as a maximum about one-third of that which the present law says is recoverable in such cases. The only thing which prevents us from recovering the amounts now specified by law is the so-called "Defences." . . . .
>
> The only amendment we could stand for would be to amend the proposition so that it would apply to miners only. If the miners think this is good legislation, we should not stand in their way. Every organized worker in Cook County will agree to such an amendment. The miners might return the compliment and agree to relieve the workers in large industrial centers from the inhuman, unreasonable and vicious operations of such legislation in other places than in mines. . . . .[1]

Representatives of the railway unions, like the Chicago Federation of Labor, battled for employers' liability. Early in May the legislative committee of the Chicago Federation of Labor agreed with "friends of the Governor and his allies" (including the State Federation officials under this designation) that they would not oppose the compensation act if their liability bill were also allowed to pass.[2] The General Assembly then passed the compensation measure, with some slight changes, and also a liability act, sending both on to the governor.

[1] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," December 3, 1911; letter dated May 15, 1911.

[2] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," May 7, 1911. By this time the liability bill had been modified by a compromise in committee

On May 26, 1911, Governor Deneen held a hearing in the Senate chamber. "In response to an appeal sent out by John M. Glenn, secretary of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, about 300 manufacturers, including nine carloads from Chicago, attended the meeting." They and their attorneys submitted briefs and oral arguments urging that both bills should be vetoed. A delegation from the Chicago Federation of Labor and representatives of the railway labor organizations insisted that a compensation law ought to follow and not precede an adequate employers' liability law. "John Fitzpatrick took the position that the compensation bill was a mere sop offered by the employers and that nothing short of a straight out employers' liability law would be acceptable to the working classes." President Wright and other officials of the Illinois State Federation of Labor did not openly oppose the liability bill, but let it be understood that if only one measure was to be approved they preferred the compensation act.[1]

After mature reflection, Governor Deneen approved the compensation act and vetoed the bill dealing with employers' liability.[2]

When the next convention of the State Federation of Labor assembled at Springfield in October, 1911, the Chicago Federation of Labor delegates came instructed to oppose any indorsement of the Workmen's Compensation Law,[3] and there was a strong disposition to bring the whole con-

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 453.

[2] The fact that the compensation measure embodied the recommendations of the voluntary commission representing both employers and employees was important in influencing him to give it his approval.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 454. He vetoed the liability bill on the ground of unconstitutionality; the Supreme Court was said to have passed upon the provisions incorporated in this measure in a previous decision.—"President Wright's Report," *Proc.* (1911), p. 14.

[3] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," October 1, 1911; *Chicago Tribune*, October 19, 1911.

troversy into the open for an airing. John H. Walker said,

> The compensation measure has been used as an issue in the state with reference to the standing of different men in the labor movement, particularly the officials of the Illinois Federation of Labor. I believe no man or woman should be allowed to go home from this convention and say they did not understand the matter.[1]

A large part of the discussion which followed consisted of recrimination. The Chicago Federation "severely condemns the Illinois State Federation of Labor and the United Mine Workers of Illinois for urging the passage of the compensation bill instead of the employers' liability bill," said its representatives; and James B. Connors of the Switchmen added a like protest. The miners, with Matthew Woll, President Wright, and other supporters of compensation, accused their opponents of ignorance on the subject or insinuated that the railroad workers were not truly represented by their officials.[2] John L. Lewis and John H. Walker, of the Mine Workers, even connected some of the opposition to the workmen's compensation bill with the scandals surrounding the legislature's election of Lorimer to the United States Senate.[3]

So far as the argument dealt with the merits of the measure itself, those who opposed workmen's compensation contended that: (1) The new law placed the amount for accidental death at from $1,500 to $3,500, and this meant a reduction of as much as $8,500 in the size of the award to dependents; for as much as $10,000 might be recovered under a liability law, especially if the "three defenses" were re-

[1] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 95–96.

[2] "I can understand," said John L. Lewis of the Miners, however, "why the switchmen of this state, as represented by Brother Connors, are not in favor of the compensation measure. . . . . By an act of Congress in 1908 the railroad employes were placed in a better position to recover damages. . . . because the fellow servant rule was abolished on all interstate traffic."—*Ibid.*, p. 113.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 111–16, 159–60.

moved. "So far as the miners are concerned this law has been a benefit to them. . . . . But here is the proposition. In benefiting the miners to the extent of $1,500 you have pulled me down," said James B. Connors, of the switchmen.[1] (2) In order to avoid constitutional difficulties the act had been framed in such a way that an employer might elect not to come under the compensation law, but in this case the three traditional defenses would be denied him in a suit for damages. If he did accept the compensation act, however, he could avail himself of the defenses should he be sued. Thus, said opponents of compensation, the hated defenses were written into statute law for the first time. (3) A severe liability law would force employers to concern themselves with the prevention of accidents. Those who favored the liability principle wanted "to make it so expensive for employers to kill their workmen that every safety appliance known to science will be installed."[2] (4) The maximum payable after the death of a married man under the compensation law is much higher than in the case of a single man; therefore, employers will hire single men in preference to married ones. (5) The benefits provided by the compensation law are too low.

Those who favored workmen's compensation argued that: (1) There had never been a case in Illinois in which $10,000 damages had been awarded; from $600 to $700 was a high average, and only a minority of injured workmen obtained anything at all. (2) Even if the employers' three defenses were removed most injured workmen would obtain nothing, for a relatively small number of accidents could be traced directly to someone's negligence. (3) The compensation law, on the other hand, provided relief in all industrial accident cases in the trades to which it applied, no matter

[1] *Proc.* (1911), p. 105.

[2] *Chicago Tribune*, August 26, 1910, quoted by Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

how caused. (4) The stipulated amounts under the compensation law would be worth more in actual practice than court judgments for much larger sums, since there would be no attorney fees. (5) That larger amounts would be paid out to workmen under a compensation law than under a liability law with the three defenses removed was proved by insurance rates charged employers in the state of Washington. Rates under the compensation law were double those under the alternative employers' liability law, even though Washington's compensation law carried lower benefits than those enacted in Illinois.

On the whole, the speeches of men like President Wright and Matthew Woll who defended the compensation act showed much better knowledge of the subject and a more level-headed view of the question than those made by their opponents. President Wright said, "The men who are speaking against the compensation law do not know what they are talking about," and he probably was not far wrong. Workmen's compensation was a comparatively new thing; it looked like a joker to those who had been fighting for a liability statute. It would require a few years of trial to demonstrate the advantages of the compensation method from the standpoint of the workman.

When the fires of oratory had burned low in the 1911 convention and everyone had given vent to his feelings, Victor A. Olander came forward with the practical observation that "we have a compensation law; it is on the statute books. Now what are we going to do with it, and how are we going to get the most out of it for our people? That seems to be the question both downstate and up in Chicago, too." On motion of Mr. Woll, the incoming officers were directed to make a thorough study of the provisions of the law, securing competent counsel for the purpose, and to forward the conclusions to every affiliated organization in order that

the members might take proper steps to safeguard their interests.[1]

In the course of the next year the Workmen's Compensation Law was attacked in the courts, and the State Federation retained Attorneys Seymour Stedman and Samuel A. Harper to defend it.[2] In answer to President Wright's assertion that he would go through Chicago and up and down the state explaining the compensation act, the Chicago Federation of Labor appointed a committee to get "the facts" from its point of view, and later it published a lengthy pamphlet to expose the demerits of the new law. It was denied, however, that the Chicago Federation intended to seek the repeal of the act, wishing to give it a fair trial.[3] Many employers, particularly in railroading and mining, elected not to come under the law; they preferred instead to give up their liability defenses. This led President Wright to advise the 1912 convention that "the next step would logically be a compulsory measure."[4]

The delegates assembled at Danville in 1912 indorsed the compensation law, commended the action of State Federation officials in hiring attorneys to defend it, resolved to do all in their power "to uphold and, if possible, amend the present Workmen's Compensation Law, so the workers of this state will receive better results," and asked the Federation's attorneys to submit a digest "similar to the one submitted for the Chicago Federation of Labor by their attorney," for the information of members. In addition, Attorneys Stedman and Harper appeared before the convention to make extended statements regarding the opera-

[1] *Proc.* (1911), p. 150.

[2] "President's Report," *Proc.* (1912), p. 22.

[3] "Chicago Federation of Labor Minutes," December 3, 1911; *Proc.* (1912,) pp. 22–23.

[4] *Proc.* (1912), p. 23.

tion of the law, to point out improvements which might be made in it, and to answer questions.[1]

Acting under the instructions of the convention, the State Federation's officers had the Compensation Law redrafted and improved and introduced it in the legislature of 1913. This time the Chicago Federation of Labor, after giving the state body "a tremendous scolding," ordered its legislative committee to co-operate in favor of the revised bill, "with the understanding that the Illinois State Federation accept all responsibility for this legislation, or any effect it will have on our members or our unions in the future."[2] In spite of "bitter opposition" in the House, which for a time seemed insurmountable, the redrafted bill became law in the form originally recommended.[3]

The new law of 1913 as worked out by Messrs. Stedman and Harper in many weeks of labor, embodied several important changes. Most significant was the creation of an Industrial Board to administer its provisions.[4] When this period in its history drew to a close, the State Federation of Labor had succeeded in establishing the principle of workmen's compensation in Illinois and had begun the steady work of amendment and improvement which has continued to the present day. The alterations brought about in successive legislatures since 1913 will be mentioned in a later chapter.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 152, 178, 151, 133–52.

[2] "President Wright's Report," *Proc.* (1913), p. 28, quoting resolution adopted by the Chicago Federation of Labor. "This responsibility," says Wright, "was cheerfully assumed, and whatever of credit or blame . . . . may come from the law must be checked up to our account."—*Ibid.*

[3] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 462.

[4] "President Wright's Report," *Proc.* (1913), p. 32.

CHAPTER XVI

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY, 1898–1913

A. THE WORKDAY AND THE WORK WEEK

After 1900, efforts to shorten the workday by legislation are absent from the Federation's program, except in the special case of women and children, or as applied to government work.

In 1903 the retail clerks tried unsuccessfully to get a Sunday closing law through the Illinois legislature, but when they asked the help of the State Federation of Labor the convention refused to indorse their proposed statute. It was argued that in the poorer districts of Chicago a great many people would suffer if the stores were closed on Sunday, for "many of them have no ice boxes, and they cannot keep milk and meat without spoiling." Furthermore, organization, not legislation, was held to be the proper remedy for undesirable hours of labor. Most important of all, certain important trade unions, notably the Bar Tenders' League, were opposed to a Sunday closing law.[1]

Not until 1913 did the movement for a shorter working week come before the State Federation; then both the barbers and the waiters brought the matter up. The barbers sought a law that would close barber-shops on Sunday; one applying only to barber-shops had been held unconstitutional in 1895,[2] and they wanted it replaced. The waiters

[1] "That resolution is in conflict with the Bar Tenders' League, and I believe they should be consulted before such a resolution is adopted here. It is a well known fact that the Liquor Dealers' Association has been of great benefit to the Cigar Makers' Organization. Now if we begin to fight them, where will we get off at?"—Remarks of J. J. Kearney, *Proc.* (1903), p. 34.

[2] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

suggested a more general law to require "one day's rest in seven," not necessarily on Sunday, to be applicable to all trades. Their request that the State Federation assist the various hotel employees' unions and welfare societies which had interested themselves in the agitation for a six-day week by law was granted. So the demand for "one day's rest in seven" took the place of the abandoned one for Sunday closing.[1]

B. PAYMENT OF WAGES

The Case Garnishment Law, which reduced the wage exemption allowed heads of families to $8.00 a week, evoked bitter protest from organized labor immediately after its passage in 1897.[2] Each of the next three State Federation conventions demanded the repeal of this "iniquitous and oppressive" law and the enactment of a substitute "which will give the honest but unfortunate debtor a chance to live." The chief objection urged against the Case law was that it "has given birth to a horde of money-lending sharks who prey upon the misfortunes and necessities of the poor."[3] Other labor organizations and the Bureau of Labor Statistics became interested, an active labor lobby made itself heard in the 1901 General Assembly, and the offensive law was replaced by a new one which raised the exemption to $15.00 a week and required the employer to pay exempt wages directly to the wage-earner.[4]

This success was hailed by the State Federation as something of a triumph. "The year 1901 was the greatest for usefulness in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor," said a circular sent out shortly after. "By the

[1] *Proc.* (1913), p. 211.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 108 f.

[3] *Proc.* (1898), pp. 21, 26; (1899), pp. 16, 28; (1900), p. 11.

[4] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 153 f.; *Proc.* (1901), p. 4.

repeal of the Case Garnishment Law thousands of honest laboring men were placed beyond the reach of unscrupulous and unjust litigation, and were elevated again to the place they occupied previous to the enactment of that obnoxious measure."[1] Mr. Ross, of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, stated that he believed this new law gave Illinois the most liberal wage-exemption statute in the United States.[2]

In 1905 the labor lobby opposed and defeated a bill designed to reduce the exemption from $15.00 to $10.00.[3] Then the Retail Merchants' Association sought a conference with the State Federation of Labor, and the boards of the two organizations held a meeting. The Federation, however, refused to countenance any change in the garnishment law and successfully maintained its position in the legislature.[4]

Another type of wage regulation was represented by an act of 1903 which prohibited any corporation from withholding wages under the pretext that the wages so withheld would be presented to the employee as a gratuity at some future date, on condition that his services were satisfactory.[5] The State Federation instructed its Executive Committee to defend this law in the courts, because "it is of vital importance to this Federation that all laws in the interest of labor be protected."[6]

A general wages-lien bill was drawn up by an attorney for the State Federation and pushed actively after 1911, but apparently it made little headway.[7]

[1] "Secretary's Report," *Proc.* (1902), p. 25.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[3] *Report of the Illinois State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen* (1905), p. 22.

[4] *Proc.* (1906), pp. 9, 10–11.

[5] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 182 n.

[6] *Proc.* (1903), pp. 35–36.

[7] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 25–26.

In 1910 representatives of the Switchmen's Union and the machinists secured the backing of the Illinois State Federation of Labor for a semi-monthly pay-day bill, and each year thereafter the measure was indorsed until its passage in 1913. The railroad organizations were most interested in securing legislation of this kind, and they played a large part in getting it through the legislature.[1]

C. HEALTH, SAFETY, COMFORT

One of the major pieces of labor legislation secured in Illinois during this period of the Federation's history was the Health, Safety and Comfort Act of 1909. "By this new law Illinois, which had been practically without factory legislation, took its place in the front rank of the states making provision for the health and safety of employees."[2]

Ever since the eighties the Illinois State Federation had been asking for laws of this kind, and various welfare organizations outside the ranks of organized labor had also been campaigning for a more adequate factory act. In 1907 State Factory Inspector Davies, at the request of Governor Deneen, prepared a bill for the legislature. This was supported by the labor lobby and received widespread support from other sources, but failed to pass.[3]

[1] "The railroad corporations of the state pay their employes on the monthly plan, thus compelling the major portion of them to solicit credit in order to live, and compelling them to pay at least 10 per cent more for their living," said a resolution adopted in 1911.

"Some of the merchants, also, doubtless looking forward to cash discounts on purchases, joined in the effort to secure its passage," reported President Wright of the semimonthly pay bill.

See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 128–30, for a concise history of this legislation; also, *Proc.* (1910), p. 71; (1911), p. 152; (1912), pp. 170, 185; (1913), pp. 30, 41.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 239. As there is an excellent account of this law and the history of its preparation and enactment in the *History of Illinois Labor Legislation*, relatively little space is given to it here. Readers interested in the details are referred to chap. x of Mr. Beckner's work.

[3] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

After the refusal of the General Assembly to enact his bill, Mr. Davies secured the introduction and adoption of a joint resolution which authorized the governor to appoint an Industrial Commission of nine members—three representing employers, three employees, and three the public—which should investigate thoroughly and report to the governor, by bill or otherwise, the most advisable methods of providing for the health, safety, and comfort of the employees of factories, mercantile establishments, mills, and workshops. The commission as appointed by Governor Deneen included President Edwin R. Wright, of the State Federation, who became chairman; Peter W. Collins, secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Springfield; and William Rossell, at that time a member of the Legislative Committee of the Chicago Federation of Labor.[1]

This commission did its work thoroughly and was able to agree upon a bill which both employers and employees thought to be entirely reasonable and satisfactory. Its work was characterized by the best of good feeling throughout; differences and misunderstandings due to divergent points of view were found to iron out during the process of investigation. The General Assembly passed the agreed bill without difficulty, and, as Professor Ernst Freund remarked, Illinois was no longer distinguished by the absence of factory regulations for the health, safety, and comfort of its workmen and working women, but could take its place in that respect with the most advanced communities.[2] By 1911 the factory-

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 231. Other members were: Samuel A. Harper, secretary, attorney at law, Chicago; Charles Piez, Link Belt Co., Chicago; Emerit E. Baker, Kewanee Boiler Co., Kewanee; P. A. Peterson, Union Furniture Co., Rockford; Dr. Henry B. Favill, Tuberculosis Institute, Chicago; Graham Taylor, Chicago Commons, Chicago; David Ross, secretary of State Bureau of Labor Statistics, Springfield.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 240. See this reference for details of the new statute.

inspection department was asserting that there was a reduction of approximately one-half in the number of industrial accidents as a result of the hazardous and dangerous machinery regulations of the new law.[1]

In addition to championing the general Health, Safety and Comfort Act of 1909, the State Federation exerted its influence on behalf of more particular measures designed to serve individual crafts or industries. It backed the boilermakers in 1907 in their efforts to secure a law for the inspection of steam boilers; it helped put the Metal Polishers' Bill through the 1911 legislature, an act designed to protect the health of workmen employed about emery wheels and emery belts; it aided the street-car men in their efforts for laws to require the heating of vestibules, glass fronts of such a nature as to protect motormen from dust and storm, air brakes, and crews of three men on interurban cars; it assisted the truck-drivers in the campaign which resulted in a legislative requirement of 1913 that trucks must be equipped with windshields to protect the eyes and general comfort of the drivers.[2] As early as 1899 the seamen asked, and secured, indorsement for a Congressional bill designed to reduce the hazards of sea employment by compelling companies to hire a sufficient number of competent sailors; the last two conventions of this period each urged the passage of the La Follette Seamen's Bill.[3] The State Federation aided the miners to secure a law which required operators to provide a washroom at the top of each mine, and when this statute was held to be unconstitutional in 1906 because of its application only to mine-owners and not to other employers, the Federation again worked with the miners and secured a new Wash House

[1] "President Wright's Report," *Proc.* (1911), p. 19.

[2] *Proc.*, (1907), p. 46; (1908), p. 4; (1911), p. 12; (1912), pp. 187, 179; Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 244, 250.

[3] *Proc.* (1899), p. 23; (1912), p. 183; (1913), p. 77.

Law in 1913, this time covering coal mines, steel mills, foundries, machine-shops, or other businesses in which employees become covered with grease or dirt to an extent which might endanger their health or make them offensive to the public.[1] In 1907 the Federation championed an important piece of safety legislation in a Building Trades Law, which lessened the dangers to which employees working on buildings, bridges, and other aerial structures were exposed.[2]

The Federation co-operated with the railroad unions through the labor lobby conferences at Springfield and thus helped to procure a number of special laws applying to the operation of trains—for example, a Railroad Safety Appliance Law and a Law for Inspection of Safety Appliances in 1905.[3] A Full Crew Bill and other legislative proposals were indorsed at the instance of the switchmen.[4] For the most part the initiative in drafting, introducing, and urging railroad labor legislation was taken by the brotherhoods and the other railway unions; the State Federation of Labor gave its assistance whenever requested to do so.

Much the same may be said of legislation for the safety of coal-miners. Because the United Mine Workers had perfected a powerful state organization of their own just prior to the beginning of this period, and because the coal-mining industry involves unique problems of its own which baffle an outsider, the role of the State Federation of Labor in improving the mining code was that of a second to the Illinois mine-workers themselves. The miners worked out their own proposals, hired their own lawyers to draft bills, kept their own lobbyists at Springfield, and directed their own strategy.

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 240; *Proc.* (1913), p. 41.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 245; *Proc.* (1913), p. 37.

[3] *Proc.* (1905), p. 10; Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–54.

[4] *Proc.* (1908), p. 10; (1911), p. 205.

Nevertheless, the backing of other organized labor groups represented by the State Federation of Labor was a considerable aid to them, particularly in working with the large number of legislators from Chicago. That the miners attached great importance to a strong State Federation of Labor is shown by the fact that they affiliated all their locals in a body after 1908.

The Shot Fire Bill, first introduced in 1903, provoked a hot fight in the General Assembly before its passage in 1905. It required that one expert fire all shots while all the men were out of the mine. "We pushed it through in two years—pressed it hard," says Barney Cohen, who was president of the State Federation at the time. "We (that is the State Federation lobby) had the Chicago legislators, and the miners went at the downstaters hard."[1]

A very important measure which the State Federation aided the miners to procure was the Miners' Qualification Act of 1907. In order to obtain a certificate of competency, this law required a miner to have had two years of practical experience and to answer orally in an intelligent and correct manner at least twelve practical questions on mining propounded to him by a Miners' Examining Board. The examining boards were composed of experienced and skilful miners actually engaged in the business of digging coal. This law tended to bring about greater safety in mining—a trade in which each man's life depends upon the skill and judgment of his fellows. But while ostensibly a safety law, its greatest significance is to be found in the fact that it operates to prevent the importation of strike-breakers during stoppages, and thus greatly strengthens the power of the union.[2]

The State Federation of Labor had little or nothing to do with the enactment of the revised mining code of 1899, nor

[1] Barney Cohen, interview.

[2] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 329 f. Amendments were secured in 1909 and 1913.

with most of the other purely mining legislation enacted during this period, except for the laws mentioned in the foregoing. The act of 1899 was framed under the guidance of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and introduced into the General Assembly as an "agreed" bill—a bill, that is, with the approval of both employers and employees; it passed both houses without a dissenting vote. "The importance of this step cannot be over-emphasized," says Beckner, "inasmuch as the method of agreement and united support of bills by both parties involved has been used with remarkable success in practically all mining legislation in Illinois since 1909. . . . ."[1] After 1909 the process of legislation by agreement was recognized in the creation of the Mining Investigation Commission, a tripartite body appointed by the governor and consisting of three coal-operators, three coal-miners, and three qualified persons not in political life or identified with either side. Practically all coal-mine laws enacted in Illinois since the creation of this commission have first been agreed upon by it through a process of collective bargaining.

Laws for the health, safety, and comfort of wage-earners are of no value unless enforced by an efficient factory inspection service. Needless to say, the Illinois State Federation of Labor gave consistent support throughout this period to all efforts looking toward the improvement of that branch of state administration. In 1903, and again in 1911, its Legislative Committee was able to report with satisfaction that laws had been passed increasing the force of factory inspectors and organizing their work more effectively.[2]

D. ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

See chapter xv.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 295.

[2] *Proc.* (1903), p. 9; (1911), p. 12. For details see Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 268 f., chap. xviii.

E. CHILD LABOR

The Child Labor Law passed in 1891 and improved in 1893 and 1897 was defective, chiefly because it allowed children to be employed on the strength of age affidavits by their parents; it seemed to encourage perjury more than it limited child labor.[1] Consequently, various citizens and organizations interested in child welfare, led by such people as Miss Jane Addams, of Hull-House, sought a new law. The Illinois State Federation of Labor lent its support to the movement, denouncing child labor in any form as opposed to the cardinal principles of unionism "and a direct menace to the future of the laboring element." It determined to appoint a committee of three to bring pressure to bear upon the General Assembly for the enactment of a more stringent law, one that would provide sufficient punishment for violations to assure its observance.[2]

The Legislative Committee was able to report to the 1903 convention that a new child-labor law had been secured. Beckner says,

> The passage of this law represented a distinct advance in the child labor legislation of Illinois. The substitution of age and school certificates to be issued only by the school authorities for the old affidavit system, the provision for an eight-hour day and a forty-eight hour week, the prohibition of night work, the disbarment of children under sixteen from employment in many of the more dangerous occupations, and certain provisions of less individual importance, all taken together gave Illinois one of the best bodies of protective legislation for children to be found at that time in any state.[3]

Barney Cohen, president of the State Federation from 1903 to 1906, considers its part in the enactment of this law one

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

[2] *Proc.* (1902), p. 22.

[3] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

of the most important successes of the Federation during his administration.[1]

Subsequently there were several attempts by various commercial interests to repeal or weaken the Child Labor Law; the Illinois State Federation of Labor exerted its influence against all of these. In 1911, particularly, when theater-owners attempted to legalize the employment of children on the stage, there was a battle at Springfield. The Federation of Labor joined with representatives of the Chicago Juvenile Protective Association, the Mothers' Congress of Illinois, the Illinois State Federation of Women's Clubs, and the State and National Child Labor Committees in defeating this bill.[2]

The State Federation also favored the Compulsory Education Law passed in 1903, and during the latter part of this period urged what it called the "Kid Bill," a bill providing that any child under sixteen when not at work must return to school.[3]

F. WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

In 1895 the Supreme Court of Illinois had held the Women's Eight Hour Law of 1893 to be unconstitutional;[4] but thirteen years later the Supreme Court of the United States gave renewed hope to those who advocated the limitation of working hours for women when it upheld, in a unanimous decision, the Oregon Ten Hour Law.[5]

Accordingly, organized working women, united under the banner of the Women's Trade Union League, secured the introduction of an eight-hour bill into the General Assembly

[1] Interview.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[3] *Proc.* (1903), p. 9; (1913), p. 32.

[4] *Ritchie* v. *The People*, 155 Illinois Reports 98.

[5] *Muller* v. *Oregon*, 208 U. S. 412 (1908).

of 1909. When the strenuous opposition of manufacturers and laundry-owners seemed bound to defeat the measure in that form, Senator Walter Clyde Jones, who had it in charge, persuaded the Senate to substitute a ten-hour bill drawn in the exact language of the Oregon act. This bill, after a lively battle in which the advocates of the "girls' bill" proved themselves able lobbyists, became law. When the inevitable court battle developed, the Illinois Supreme Court had either to fly in the face of the United States Supreme Court or reverse its own earlier attitude, and it found reasons for doing the latter.[1] At the next session of the legislature (1911) an amendment went through extending the scope of the law to include mercantile establishments, hotels and restaurants, telegraph and telephone establishments, express and transportation companies, and park attendants, in addition to the laundries, factories, and mechanical establishments covered by the act of 1909. All subsequent attempts by both sides to alter the Women's Ten Hour Law have been unsuccessful.[2]

The Women's Trade Union League bore the brunt of the battle in the fight for this legislation, but the State Federation of Labor always showed its sympathy with the demands of the women and gave its active support when occasion required.[3]

[1] *Ritchie & Co.* v. *Wayman*, 244 Ill. 509.

[2] For the history of this legislation and efforts at modification see Beckner, *op. cit.*, chap. ix.

[3] Each convention, it will be recalled, devoted a half-day session to the women's program, and the officers were under constant instructions to promote their cause.—*Proc.* (1908), p. 17; (1909), pp. 92, 107; (1910), p. 58; (1913), pp. 41, 46, 145.

In the legislature the State Federation's lobby "was there to back us all the time," though the Women's Trade Union League directed and led the fight. President Wright came to the hearings and helped when asked; though he was busy with his own projects. Occasionally someone would circulate a rumor that labor did not favor the "girls' bill," and then the State Federation representatives

In 1906 the State Federation indorsed a bill by the metal-polishers to prohibit the employment of girls and women in any room where grinding, polishing, and buffing was done by machinery; and three years later it approved a similar proposal for excluding women from the coreroom of foundries.[1] Both were put forward as health measures, but they were doubtless inspired chiefly by the prospect of ruinous competition in certain trades as women entered industry.

When the bill authorizing a national investigation into the conditions of women and children in industry was before Congress, the Illinois State Federation urged its passage. Illinois women, specifically Mary McDowell and Jane Addams, had started the movement for such an inquiry; Miss McDowell lobbied for it in Washington, and finally was successful.[2]

This national investigation and the findings of the Chicago Vice Commission led to a demand for a minimum-wage law to apply to women workers, which was voiced in the State Federation convention of 1911. President Wright called attention to the matter in his report and urged action; a resolution introduced by the Women's Trade Union League and adopted unanimously asked the next legislature to create a commission which would ascertain the best method of securing a minimum wage for women.[3]

At the Danville convention of 1912 the minimum wage was discussed at length. Some of the prominent men of the convention, imbued with the philosophy which the American

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would come out officially with a statement. President Wright and Secretary Morris took part in the hearing before Governor Deneen.—Interviews, Miss Mary McDowell, Miss Agnes Nestor; Women's Trade Union League legislative reports supplied by Miss Nestor.

[1] *Proc.* (1906), p. 23; (1909), p. 180.

[2] *Proc.* (1906), p. 20; interview, Miss Mary McDowell.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 17, 97.

Federation of Labor had adopted in its fights for improved wages and hours for men, were skeptical of the legislative remedy. Massachusetts had passed a wage-board law to go into effect in 1913, and Victor A. Olander said, "If Illinois cannot get anything better than the Massachusetts law on the question of minimum wage . . . . I believe we had better give up the idea entirely. . . . ." He criticized particularly the provision which allowed an appeal to be taken from the findings of the minimum-wage commission to the courts when the employer said his business was endangered. More important than a minimum-wage law was to get a trades dispute act like that of England in order to limit arbitrary rulings by the courts in strike cases. The history of the labor movement teaches, he said, "that the right to strike and the freedom to struggle gets us more than anything else possibly can." Nevertheless, since the minimum wage was to apply only to women the question ought to be settled by the women of the movement. "If they think it is best to start a movement for a minimum-wage law for women in this state, we ought to go the route with them. I feel they are the best judges of what is for their own interests."[1]

James B. Connors, of the switchmen, pronounced himself definitely against a minimum wage by law. "It would be a millstone around the necks of every worker. If a minimum scale is established by law . . . . the minimum will be the maximum." John H. Walker thought such fears were unfounded. "The more I think of it the more I am convinced a minimum wage is desirable, and that we can safeguard ourselves so it will not be hurtful to anyone." Miss Elizabeth Maloney, of the Waitresses' Union and the Women's Trade Union League, pointed out that Connors' objection had been

[1] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 87 f.

urged when legal limitation of hours for women was being considered.

Some girls said then to the bindery women who were enjoying an eight-hour day: "You will be put back to ten hours, because a ten-hour law is provided by the state." That did not happen. The same thing was said of the girls who were getting the Saturday half-holiday, that it would be taken away if we established the ten-hour day. That did not happen, and will never happen where there is an organization behind the girls.[1]

The Federation expressed itself formally on the subject by adopting the work of its Committee on Officers' Reports. Women should be protected against the evils of unlimited competition and the greed of unscrupulous employers. Whether this protection should be by governmental authority or not was a question for the women workers themselves to decide; "their wishes should first be consulted, and if agreed that the restraint should be by law, we strongly urge the Federation to support our women workers in the demand for a minimum-wage law."[2] Later in the convention representatives of the Women's Trade Union League came forward with a resolution "that a bill creating a minimum wage board commission with necessary powers and machinery to inquire into the wages paid to women workers, to arbitrate concerning them and recommend a minimum wage, shall be introduced in the incoming Legislature." This was adopted.[3]

Several bills for establishing minimum-wage boards and commissions were introduced during the 1913 legislative session, but none of them made much progress. Afterward President Wright in his annual report and the Women's

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 93.

[2] At the same time, the committee cautioned against the enactment of a law like that in Massachusetts, "wherein ultimately the courts are not only advised but instructed that whenever any minimum wage regulation is determined, regardless of how honest and fair it may be, any employer can have it set aside if it is likely to affect the prosperity of the business."—*Ibid.*, p. 165.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 174–75.

Trade Union League speakers in their half-day session gave them the merest mention. Most of their efforts had been concentrated on a measure for amending the Ten Hour Law to establish a fifty-four hour week.[1]

Minimum-wage legislation was proposed in several legislative sessions from 1913 to 1921. Since then the movement has died out completely, owing to the unfavorable decision of the United States Supreme Court in the District of Columbia minimum-wage case.[2]

G. EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT

The only official action of the Illinois State Federation of Labor on this subject during the period, so far as recorded, was a resolution adopted in 1908 at the instance of A. F. Germer and John H. Walker of the mine-workers. It declared that the problem of feeding the hungry school children of Chicago and other large cities was one demanding immediate attention; that in this dire emergency the school authorities should provide adequate food without delay, as a matter of justice and free from the taint of charity; that national, state, and city authorities should provide work for the jobless fathers at union wages; and that the duty and authority of school boards and other public bodies to provide such relief should be made more clear by appropriate legislation.[3] In 1913 President Wright reported among the legislative gains of the year that the Federation had secured the authorization of a commission to study unemployment in Illinois.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 30, 59.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 131; *Adkins* v. *Children's Hospital*, 261 U. S. 525 (1923).

[3] *Proc.* (1908), p. 7.

[4] *Proc.* (1913), p. 30.

H. OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

The General Assembly in 1907 passed a joint resolution drafted by Chief State Factory Inspector Davies which set up a state commission to investigate causes and conditions leading to diseases of occupation and to suggest desirable legislation.[1] This commission was continued in 1909 with an appropriation of $15,000, and reported in 1911 after a valuable pioneer investigation.

The State Federation of Labor warmly commended Governor Deneen for appointing an efficient group of experts to study the important but little understood subject of occupational disease, and it determined to co-operate with the commission in every possible way. For this purpose it established a permanent standing committee of its own, having in mind that "the state commission stands in need of facts which can best be furnished by the workers themselves." Delegates were asked to take up the subject in their respective unions and to communicate all information which they might be able to obtain to the chairman of the committee, who would then present it to the commission.[2]

As a result of this investigation, the General Assembly passed the Occupational Disease Act of 1911. It dealt specifically with the handling of lead, lead compounds, brass, zinc, paris green, and other industrial poisons; but portions of the act were broad enough to apply to any employment tending to produce disease or ill health. The employer was required to install adequate protective devices for carrying off dust and fumes, to have the floors scrubbed daily where certain poisonous materials were used, and in general to

[1] This was in pursuance of a recommendation by the Industrial Insurance Commission of 1906.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

[2] *Proc.* (1909), p. 99.

take reasonable precautions for preserving the health of his workers.[1]

"For the first time in the history of the American Labor movement," an occupational disease law had been enacted, said President Wright in reporting this success to the Springfield convention of 1911. "Not all of our trades are dangerous through industrial accident," he went on. "More printers, cigar-makers and stonecutters die from tuberculosis than do railroad men or miners from accident." He suggested that the time had nearly come when sickness should be classified as an accident and the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Law be so adjusted as to provide automatic relief on the same basis as for accidents.[2]

The Committee on Occupational Disease submitted a lengthy analysis of the act; emphasized the immense importance of the subject; and recommended that the topic be taken up by local and international unions, central bodies, and by the American Federation of Labor. The Illinois State Federation of Labor "has taken much interest, has given great aid and is deserving of much commendation for the enactment of this humane legislation," said the report;[3] and it now took the lead in bringing the problem of occupational disease to the attention of the rest of the labor movement of the country.

In 1912 the Illinois State Federation of Labor instructed its Legislative Committee to aid the metal-polishers in their efforts to have the occupations of polishing, buffing, and

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

[2] *Proc.* (1911), p. 16. Again in 1913 Wright urged that the Federation endeavor to have industrial diseases placed on the same basis as industrial accidents. —*Proc.* (1913), p. 36. Occupational diseases were brought under the compensation law of Illinois by acts of 1921 and 1923.—Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 81–85. Matthew Woll, International President of the Photo Engravers' Union, was chairman of the Committee on Occupational Disease and wrote the report quoted above.

plating included more specifically in the Occupational Disease Law; and another convention, at the instance of the Women's Trade Union League, pledged itself to co-operate with the American Association for Labor Legislation to secure the passage of the Esch bill, then pending in Congress, against the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches.[1]

I. OLD AGE PENSIONS; SOCIAL INSURANCE

President Wright, always hospitable to new ideas, recommended as early as 1911 that agitation be started for a system of old age pensions. He said:

> With the restriction of employment to young men in the industrial field, the agitation for old age pensions by the state government is rapidly taking form. I believe the industrial soldier should receive consideration and relief equal to that granted the veterans of our armies. It may require a constitutional amendment to permit a state law of this nature, but when secured the question of state insurance in its many phases will cease to be the vexatious problem now confronting us. Every effort should be made to popularize the pension idea.[2]

Again in his 1913 report he alluded to the subject, this time more at length. He said,

> We are a quarter of a century behind the best thought of our European brothers on matters of this kind, and unless we workers give more thought to the subject we will find our employers firmly entrenched in this as in other fields. The trade union must be more than a stop-gap of today's expediency; we must plan for tomorrow and must begin today.[3]

The convention itself took no action, except to adopt the report of its Committee on Officers' Reports, which in 1911 commended Wright's suggestion that old-age pensions should receive the attention of organized labor.[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1912), p. 175; (1911), p. 97.

[2] *Proc.* (1911), p. 17.

[3] *Proc.* (1913), p. 39.

[4] *Proc.* (1911), p. 76.

K. PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Demands of the postal clerks for shorter hours, wage increases, or changed conditions of work were indorsed many times and the stand of the Federation communicated to Illinois congressmen.[1] In 1909 there was an attempt to reduce wages and install piecework at the Rock Island arsenal; the Tri-City Labor Congress stated that it "must have the help of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in order to bring this to the attention of the Senators and Representatives in Congress from this state." The State Federation instructed its officers to communicate with two Illinois congressmen, inviting them to meet with the arsenal employees in order to become acquainted with the situation.[2] A bill passed at the instance of Chicago firemen in 1913, providing for a two-platoon system, was backed by the legislative representatives of the State Federation, as were amendments to the pension law requested by Chicago teachers.[3]

[1] For example, *Proc.* (1909), p. 147.

[2] *Proc.* (1909), p. 154.

[3] *Proc.* (1913), p. 30.

CHAPTER XVII

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY, 1898–1913—*Continued*

II

A. CRAFT PROTECTION

The Miners' Qualification Law, mentioned above as a safety measure, was even more important from the standpoint of craft protection. Through its control of the miners' examining boards the union was able to regulate the entrance of new men into the trade and to prevent the importation of "scabs."

The Barbers' Union likewise sought to strengthen its bargaining position and to raise the standards of its craft by securing a state license law. The State Federation of Labor assisted it in a vigorous campaign,[1] and in 1907 the Barbers' License Law was passed. It did not work as well as the union had hoped, however. As T. A. Shea explained to a Federation convention, "It is a valuable law from a hygienic and a sanitary standpoint; but from a union standpoint it has not done as much as it should have done and can do." The trouble was that while the governor had appointed to the Examining Board "a good committee for enforcing the law"

[1] The conventions of 1898, 1899, 1900, and 1901 all indorsed a bill drawn up by the barbers, and the officers of the Federation aided in the lobbying work at Springfield.—*Proc.* (1898), p. 28; (1899), pp. 17, 22; (1900), p. 17; interview, T. A. Shea of the Bloomington Barbers' Union. A resolution presented to the Federation in 1901 recited that "the history of barbers in cities and towns throughout the state of Illinois has been . . . . a record of constant struggle against oppression and unsanitary conditions." It complained of "the cheap and inferior class of shops who employ poor workmen, and who, for lack of cleanliness and a knowledge of skin diseases . . . . spread disease among our citizens." "These shops demoralize and degrade our business . . . . thus detracting from the dignity of our craft."—*Proc.* (1901), p. 11.

he had not appointed enough union men. "From our standpoint a majority of the members on the Board do not understand what we want. . . . . The members should be bona fide union barbers." "You all understand," he went on, referring again to the miners, ". . . . that you would not get much good out of your law if the operators were in a majority on the Miners' Qualification Board."[1] The State Federation, of course, backed the barbers in their demand for control of the Licensing Board; in 1909 it petitioned Governor Deneen to appoint members of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union when the terms of the incumbents had expired, and again in 1913 protested against the administration of the law.[2]

The State Federation aided other trades besides the barbers and the miners in their efforts to protect their crafts and their unions by license laws. It helped to obtain a state law enabling cities to examine and license elevator-operators, and then endeavored to have the law applied through ordinances in Chicago and other cities.[3] It helped the plumbers when they sought amendments to the law licensing members of their craft; in 1906 the Legislative Committee was instructed to work for a law to examine and license stationary engineers, and, in 1910, boiler-tenders.[4]

Other crafts asked the State Federation to help them to protect or increase their employment opportunities by legislation. The street-car men, for example, wanted a law prohibiting the use of one-man cars. The teamsters asked for legislative limitation of the size of loads to be allowed on wagons. The glass bottle-blowers had the 1907 convention pledge its aid toward a law against the sale and use of old

[1] *Proc.* (1910), p. 109.

[2] *Proc.* (1913), p. 141.

[3] *Proc.* (1903), p. 35; (1906), p. 21.

[4] *Proc.* (1906), pp. 14, 23; (1910), p. 136.

bottles picked up from the junk heaps. In all of these cases the argument put forward was public safety or sanitation or something similar; the big consideration in the minds of those who offered them was usually craft protection.[1]

In passing upon these proposals for craft protection, the State Federation of Labor raised objections only in case the law sought by one craft threatened to react unfavorably upon another. For example, when the glass bottle-blowers brought in another resolution against second-hand bottles in 1913, the committee "favored the principle of the resolution but wished a more definite plan submitted," and President Wright suggested that when a bill was drawn up the brewery-workers and the milk-wagon drivers should be consulted.[2] If there was no apparent conflict of craft interest, however, then the rule was that "each craft knows best what is good for it," and the State Federation's job was simply to reinforce the demands that each craft decided to make.

B. CONVICT LABOR

See chapter XIV.

C. IMMIGRATION AND ALIEN LABOR

The Federation continued to favor the restriction of immigration.[3]

In 1909 a resolution was introduced which called upon public officials to give preference to American-born and naturalized citizens on all public work, but there were strong objections. The resolution went back to the committee to be "considered and reported upon in the spirit of the international character of the labor movement."[4]

[1] *Proc.* (1908), p. 23; (1913), p. 142; (1907), p. 45.

[2] *Proc.* (1913), p. 143.

[3] *Proc.* (1898), p. 43; (1899), p. 40; (1901), p. 11; (1905), p. 22.

[4] *Chicago Tribune*, October 22, 1907.

III

A. LEGAL STATUS OF TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR METHODS

Most of the changes in the law relating to labor organizations and their methods during this period came through court decisions, not through enactments by the legislature.[1] The Illinois State Federation exerted what influence it could to bring about decisions favorable to organized labor. For example, a few members of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees "resigned," declining to pay dues, and the association demanded that they reaffiliate or seek work with a company not employing union men; the seceders secured an injunction to restrain the union from any action which would mean the loss of their jobs, and the case was appealed to the Supreme Court. Since the decision would be important to all unions in the state, involving the right to organize and to seek the discharge of non-union men, the Illinois State Federation of Labor was appealed to for assistance and stepped vigorously into the fight. Letters were addressed to every trade union in the state, "and the entire trade union movement threw their undivided support to Division 241 of Chicago," which was conducting the court battle. Officers of the State Federation made many speeches and wrote many personal letters on the matter. "A consistent campaign was waged during the whole difficulty," said President Wright, and "the decision is a victory for all the union men of the state and is one of the results of our active publicity campaign."[2]

In 1907 the Illinois State Federation of Labor demanded the repeal of a Vagrancy Act passed by the last session of the legislature. Chief of Police Shippy, of Chicago, was said to have issued a sweeping order which prohibited the striking

[1] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, chap. ii, where these decisions are traced.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), p. 30.

telegraphers from peaceful picketing, asserting that he derived his authority from the Vagrancy Act.[1] Four years later a bill was introduced at Springfield providing for a fine of from $200 to $2,000 against anyone convicted of picketing. Of course, organized labor opposed it.[2]

The United Garment Workers complained to the State Federation in 1912 that for six years the Wholesale Clothiers' Association and the Wholesale Tailors' Association, of Chicago, had been operating blacklisting departments, sometimes under the pretext of "scientifically selecting proper workmen, according to principles of so-called scientific management and other specious pretenses." The garment-workers wanted the State Federation to secure a law "prohibiting such blacklisting, and to wipe out these fake labor bureaus, through which it is accomplished." At about the same time the railroad brotherhoods forwarded to the State Federation a bill to prohibit blacklisting, and the Federation heartily concurred.[3] Evidently the provision against blacklisting contained in the Cole Anti-Boycott Law of 1886 was a dead letter, and perhaps even unknown to most of the labor organizations, though the garment-workers had tried to invoke it.

During the eighties labor organizations had sought laws to allow them to incorporate, but we have seen that as they grew stronger they dropped that demand. Soon they began to oppose suggestions for incorporation as strenuously as those for compulsory arbitration (which had also been favored in the early days); incorporation would mean abridgment of their powers of action and would increase their civil liability.[4] In 1901, however, the Illinois State Federation was

[1] *Proc.* (1907), p. 46.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[3] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 26, 167, 172.

[4] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

not willing to advocate a law which would absolutely prohibit labor organizations from becoming incorporated, though some of its members wanted it to do so.[1]

In 1908 the cigar-makers desired improvement in the protection of the union label afforded by the acts of 1891 and 1895; so it secured the help of the State Federation in promoting a bill to be known as the Trades Union Label Act. This consisted of twelve sections and provided for the registration of labels, prosecution of counterfeiters, and penalties.[2] The bill had already passed the House in 1909 when its advocates discovered that someone—none of the parties interested could find out who was responsible—had inserted a provision phrased in such a way that if passed in that form it would have been made unlawful for any firm or corporation to handle a label issued by a trade union. The mistake was discovered when President Wright and Secretary Morris sent a copy of the bill to George W. Perkins to be sure that it was just what the cigar-makers wished. Secretary Morris, himself a member of the legislature, was notified immediately and had the Act reconsidered and killed in the House. Then a corrected copy was passed, only to die in the Committee on Labor, Mines and Mining in the Senate.[3] Subsequent efforts to revise the law against counterfeit labels also failed.[4]

[1] The East St. Louis carpenters complained that certain bodies of workmen had combined themselves into so-called unions and taken out charters under the Illinois statutes governing "corporations not for pecuniary profit." They asserted that these organizations were set up to fight the recognized trade unions and were often fostered by unfair employers; members of these "scab" unions offered their services at wages from 15 to 35 per cent below the union scale.

The Federation adopted a substitute for the carpenters' original proposal; it advocated that the law should be revised to prohibit the issuance of charters of incorporation to labor organizations in localities where a union of the same class of labor, recognized by the American Federation of Labor or a national or international union or the state of Illinois, was already in existence.—*Proc.* (1901), pp. 14, 20.

[2] Printed in full in *Proc.* (1908), pp. 7–9.

[3] *Proc.* (1909), p. 151.

[4] *Proc.* (1912), p. 176.

B. THE INJUNCTION IN LABOR DISPUTES

"The abolition of government by injunction" first appeared in the platform of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in 1897, and remained there with no further explanation until 1899.[1] Then President Dold took it up in his report. He said:

> Government by injunction is another of the latter day capitalistic weapons used to subjugate organized labor, and as such it is the most powerful of all weapons heretofore used by the capitalistic classes.
>
> Your President was one of the many strikers recently enjoined at the Bush & Gerte piano factory in the city of Chicago from the use of almost everything except the use of air, and I realize fully the import of government by injunction; and again at Carterville, three of our gallant warriors of the labor movement, striking miners, have been condemned to six months in jail, by a one-man jury, in the person of Judge Allen, for contempt of court committed by telephone. But capital owns the judges; capital owns the government; capital is avaricious; capital cares only for capital, and the only way for the wage worker to secure redress is to own the government, judges and all.[2]

In 1900 the Federation denounced the "unfair methods" of a newspaper proprietor who had obtained an injunction against the Canton Typographical Union; and in 1904 it inquired of Congressional candidates in Illinois whether or not they would support the anti-injunction bill to be introduced in the next Congress.[3]

One year later the Illinois State Federation of Labor adopted the first detailed declaration in its history dealing specifically with the injunction question. This was a document of about one thousand words introduced by Henry Knaus, District Council No. 6, United Garment Workers of America. It called attention to "the insidious sapping or undermining of our constitutional liberties by the perversion

[1] *Proc.* (1898), p. 43; (1899), p. 40.

[2] *Proc.* (1899), p. 8.

[3] *Proc.* (1900), p. 22; (1904), p. 81.

of judicial process," and proposed as a remedy that national and state laws should be enacted to prohibit the use of injunctions in labor disputes. Let public officials punish all crimes and misdemeanors under the criminal code,

> and not subject us to unknown and unknowable conditions whereby our liberties and our very lives are placed in the keeping of an autocrat wielding an injunction the terms of which cannot be understood in advance . . . . and [under which] a perfectly legal action such as soliciting the acquaintance, friendship, or good-will of a known or unknown non-unionist, may subject the innocent perpetrator to an unknown punishment.

This resolution was printed and widely circulated.[1]

The first bill designed to limit the use of injunctions in labor disputes appeared in the Illinois legislature in 1901. "It was referred to the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Affairs, but was not reported out by the Committee. From that year until the Injunction Limitation Bill of 1925 was passed, the fight for bills of this nature became a regular feature of legislative sessions in Illinois." In 1903 a bill providing that cases of contempt of court should be tried by jury and another making a distinction between direct and indirect contempt were introduced. An injunction limitation bill by Mr. Chiperfield, with amendments submitted by Representative Clarence Darrow, permitted temporary injunctions, operative not exceeding forty-eight hours, to be issued for good cause shown.[2]

The State Federation of Labor made some efforts to get the legislature to act, but, on the whole, injunction legislation was not stressed during this period. President Wright's report in 1913 devoted five words to the subject: "Contempt-of-court bills lost."[3] The attention of the Federation had

[1] *Proc.* (1905), pp. 24–25. A similar declaration was adopted in 1906.—*Proc.* (1906), p. 13.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–54.

[3] *Proc.* (1913), p. 30.

been occupied by workmen's compensation, the women's hour bills, convict labor, occupational disease, and factory acts. The injunction question practically disappeared from the Federation conventions from 1906 until 1913. In the latter year Victor A. Olander introduced a resolution which instructed the Executive Board to have an injunction limitation bill drafted for introduction into the next legislature.[1] This was the first move in a struggle which forms the central theme of the next period in this history.

C. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Since 1890 the Federation had withdrawn its once prominent demand for compulsory arbitration, and when in the first convention of this period President Hinman brought it out from retirement his remarks produced consternation. They would have been in order during the eighties, but in 1898 they were greeted with catcalls and hisses. The convention proceeded to pass a resolution:

> WHEREAS, The adoption of any law providing for compulsory arbitration under present social conditions would tend to obliterate the power of the trade union movement.
>
> *Resolved*, That we most emphatically protest against the enactment of any law having for its purpose the compulsory settlement of labor questions.[2]

There was still some difference of opinion on the subject, however. This resolution "caused the most talk of the morning."[3] One delegate who spoke for compulsory arbitration said that arbitration never would be successful until it was compulsory and that in the old countries it had been of great benefit to the workingmen. Mr. Dold, author of the resolution, opposed anything like compulsory arbitration;

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 167–68.

[2] *Proc.* (1898), pp. 6, 19, 27.

[3] *Decatur Review*, September 30, 1898.

the workingmen had got the worst of it in a good many cases, and he didn't want anything to do with it unless he could choose the arbitrators. The only way to get anything from employers was to whip them into submission. W. D. Ryan offered an amendment to the original resolution "that we accept no kind of arbitration," but the amendment was voted down. The general situation was summed up by the *Decatur Review's* reporter: "Some want compulsory arbitration, some want none whatever, and some are satisfied with what we have now. That appeared to be what suits the majority, because the resolution above was adopted in the end."[1]

In 1903 President Menche stated, "We favor arbitration, but only after conciliation has absolutely failed, and then voluntary arbitration only."[2]

D. REGULATION OF DISPUTES

During the mine troubles of the late nineties the operators had brought in a trainload of Alabama negroes under the protection of men armed with repeating rifles, resulting in bloody clashes at Pana and Virden. Governor Tanner believed that the importation of strike-breakers guarded by armed men who were not citizens of Illinois and who had no authority to perform police duty in the state was contrary to good public policy and unfair to workmen. Therefore, he secured the passage of the so-called Tanner Act by the 1899 legislature. This act prohibited employers from inducing workmen to go from one place to another within the state or from bringing workmen into the state through the use of false representations concerning the kind of work and the conditions under which it was to be performed; failure to mention labor troubles when hiring men was to be deemed

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Proc.* (1903), p. 6.

false advertisement and misrepresentation under the act, for which a fine or imprisonment might be imposed. Anyone hiring armed men to bring workmen into the state or to move them from one place to another within the state, and persons coming into Illinois armed with deadly weapons for any such purpose, without written permission of the governor, were to be imprisoned in the penitentiary for a period of from one to five years.[1]

This law, together with the Miners' Qualification Act already mentioned, proved a great boon to the Illinois Mine Workers during the strike of 1910.[2] The very next year it was declared unconstitutional in a case which went quietly through to the Supreme Court without the knowledge of organized labor. The court held that the law was invalid because it imposed a different liability upon employers hiring workmen to come to the place of employment than was imposed upon other employers and because the act contained two subjects. Attorney Sonsteby, who was called upon by President Wright for advice in the matter, thought that if the act were amended to apply generally to all employers it might be constitutional. "The court does not say so in so many words, but it infers that."[3]

Accordingly, the State Federation had the law revised to meet the objections of the court, and the convention of 1912 indorsed the redrafted Tanner Act as two separate bills —one forbidding anyone to bring armed guards into the state, the other "defining and prohibiting the use of false

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–69. Workmen persuaded to come into the state or to go from one place to another in the state by means of false representations were also entitled to recover damages.

[2] *Proc.* (1910), p. 142. "These two laws made it impossible for the operators to successfully man their mines with scabs."—Remarks of John H. Walker.

[3] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 86–89; *Proc.* (1912), p. 31. The case was *Josma* v. *Western Steel Car Co.*, 249 Ill. 508; see Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 69 f.

representation, false advertising and false pretense in procuring the performance of labor and services and fixing criminal and civil penalties for violation thereof."[1] The attempt to have these bills adopted by the 1913 General Assembly met with failure.

The attitude of the police and the use of the military in industrial disputes has always been the subject of much protest from organized labor. The state militia was used in several of the mine strikes of this period and received the most attention from the conventions of 1898 to 1913. In 1899 a delegate proposed that the expense of the militia in industrial disputes ought to be charged against the corporation or company calling for it, but a substitute resolution by Charles Dold was adopted instead:

> *Resolved,* That it is the sense of this convention that the calling of military power in cases of trouble between the employer and employe is unnecessary and productive of dangerous results.
>
> *Resolved,* That we object to the use of the State Militia or any other armed force in any and all differences that may occur between the employer and employe.[2]

The convention of 1902 urged all trade unionists to "absolutely decline membership in any body or bodies military in character that can be used for the subjugation of the laboring element," and declared that "the State Militia as organized at the present time is being constantly used by capitalists throughout the entire country as an auxiliary police force against organized labor."[3] A similar expression was concurred in by the last convention of this period, for the reason, as Secretary Barrett of the Resolutions Committee explained,

> that the only benefit the State Militia and the National Guard gives to any one in time of peace is the benefit to the employers in shooting down

[1] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 33–35. Texts are printed in full.

[2] *Proc.* (1899), p. 27.

[3] *Proc.* (1902), p. 29.

members of trade unions. If the time comes when this country is in trouble and needs men to fight for it, you will find the trade unionist there. . . . but until that time comes I think we will stand unalterably opposed to our members being part of the system at this time in effect."[1]

The convention of 1912 indorsed a bill providing that any marshal or deputy marshal, policeman, or watchman, who, in the opinion of the court or jury before whom an arrested person is brought, has made an arrest "wholly without provocation or reasonable cause," should be removed from office. This demand for legislative action grew out of police activities during the garment-workers' and pressmen's strikes in Chicago.[2]

IV

A. BALLOT REFORM

Several times during the period the movement for women's suffrage was indorsed, particularly in those conventions of the later years at which half-day sessions were given over to the women workers.[3]

From 1904 to 1909 the Federation declared itself repeatedly in favor of the direct primary for nominating party candidates. It believed that by giving more direct power to the voter it might be possible to defeat the enemies of organized labor who found places on the party tickets. When the legislature did pass a primary law the Federation criticized it in two particulars. The number of signatures required in order to secure a place on the ballot for a new party was unduly large. Likewise, the filing fee of from $25 to $100, depending upon the office, was too high, tending to make it impossible for a workingman to become a candidate for

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 196–99.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), p. 173. The proposed law is printed in full.

[3] *Proc.* (1906), p. 12; (1908), pp. 17, 21; (1911), p. 62; (1912), p. 179.

office.[1] In 1908 the convention asked that the primary law be amended so that the candidates of all parties should appear in separate columns on a single ballot, thus making it possible for a voter to choose whichever party he pleased in secrecy.[2]

The Federation favored the direct election of United States senators to replace the method of election by state legislatures; this, like other changes in election methods indorsed by labor, was regarded as "the gateway to other badly needed reforms."[3]

Once, in 1899, the State Federation of Labor declared for proportional representation.[4]

B. INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM, AND RECALL

Continuing its policy of past years, the Federation consistently urged the adoption of a constitutional amendment to provide for direct legislation by the people. Plank 7 in the platform of 1898 read: "We favor the establishment of the initiative and referendum system of government."[5]

In 1902 the movement gained considerable momentum in Illinois and the voters were given a chance to express themselves on the initiative and referendum by means of a separate advisory ballot at the election of that year. The State Federation of Labor co-operated with the Referendum League of Illinois and urged its members and their friends to vote "yes," arguing that by means of the initiative and

[1] *Proc.* (1905), pp. 26–27. This resolution, like most of those on the direct primary question, was signed by John H. Walker and others who were also calling for independent political action.

[2] *Proc.* (1908), p. 24.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[4] An amendment favoring proportional representation was attached to a free coinage resolution by a vote of 49 to 16.—*Proc.* (1899), p. 34.

[5] *Proc.* (1898), p. 43; also, *Proc.* (1899), p. 34.

referendum municipal ownership of public utilities and other needed reforms might be achieved.[1] Though the preference of the voters as expressed in this election was five to one in favor of the initiative and referendum, the legislature refused to submit a constitutional amendment on the subject.[2]

In 1904 the American Federation of Labor undertook a national campaign for the direct ballot, believing that to be "the line of least resistance for the enactment of measures in the interest of the people."[3] State federations were requested to take up the agitation. The Illinois Federation reaffirmed its faith in the initiative and referendum the next year and from then on pushed it continuously.[4] In addition, the recall of all elected officers was advocated after 1908.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

President Wright reported in 1912:

> We are rapidly gaining the co-operation of thinking men and women for a State Department of Labor. During the last year many inquiries have reached this office as to the scope of our demands on this subject. Clubs and societies taking an interest in economic subjects have joined us in studying the question of prevention of waste of effort and administration now forced through a multiplicity of boards, bureaus, commissions, etc. . . . .

Wright advocated a reorganization of state activities; "We have too many boards and too many heads, and a centralizing of responsibility will necessarily be of benefit to the workers of the state."[5]

[1] *Proc.* (1902), pp. 18, 34.

[2] *Proc.* (1907), p. 57.

[3] Resolution No. 39, quoted in *Illinois State Federation of Labor Proceedings* (1905), p. 22.

[4] *Proc.* (1906), pp. 20, 29; (1907), p. 57; (1908), pp. 7, 23; (1909), p. 179; (1911), p. 207; (1912), p. 205; (1913), pp. 33, 206.

[5] *Proc.* (1911), p. 20; (1912), p. 28.

E. THE COURTS

Along with its demands for the initiative and referendum, the State Federation advocated provision for the recall of public officers, "including the judiciary."[1]

In 1904 resolutions introduced by William Rossell, "Skinny" Madden, and Barney Cohen with regard to the method of selecting grand juries were adopted. They wanted grand-jury and petit-jury names to be drawn from the same box, saying that under the system in use in Cook County grand-jury members were almost always corporation presidents, managers, civil and mechanical engineers, railroad agents, bankers, and the like. Few craftsmen were drawn, and they usually were not union men. As a result, "the corporations are using the Grand Jury to coerce the union men of Chicago."[2] Perhaps there was some basis in truth for these allegations, but it must be remembered also that "Skinny" Madden and his cohorts who packed the conventions of these years were notorious for activities repugnant to the law as well as disgusting to the decent union men who finally ousted them from control in the Federation.

F. CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

The spirit of all state constitutions is, declared the State Federation of Labor in 1907, "that each generation should have a voice in the fundamental laws by which it is to be governed." "Almost a generation and a half" had passed since the last revision of the Illinois constitution. Joining with the Chicago Federation of Labor, the state labor body urged that a new convention be called immediately, the delegates to be selected by the people.[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 207–9.

[2] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 53, 62.

[3] *Proc.* (1907), p. 44.

In 1904 organized labor recommended the adoption of the Chicago charter amendment to the Illinois constitution. It was considered important to workingmen because the new charter would abolish the justice court and constable system, establishing municipal courts. These were expected to be more just to poor litigants.[1]

The Resolutions Committee in 1909 reported that it was "not very well posted" on the commission form of government for cities and therefore non-concurred in a resolution on the subject which someone had introduced. After being recommitted to allow delegates who knew something about the proposal to appear before the committee, the resolution was reported favorably and adopted; the Federation thus went on record in favor of the commission plan.[2]

V

A. EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

The 1898 convention expressed itself as "unqualifiedly in favor of introducing the free textbook system into public schools" and asked the legislature to submit the question to a vote of the people.[3] It also objected to the use of books printed by non-union labor. A resolution from a member of the Typographical Union in 1901 that all schoolbooks used in the public schools of the state should be "printed within its confines by printers of the state employing union labor"

[1] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 25, 45.

[2] *Proc.* (1909), pp. 117, 147–50. Some delegates argued that so long as aldermen were elected by wards the union vote could generally control at least some of them, but if the commission form of government were adopted the commissioners would be elected by the whole city and the union voters would not be able to obtain any representation at all. Therefore, they opposed the resolution. "This thing . . . . is entirely too new for the State Federation of Labor to endorse in one of its conventions. It is not much more than a year old."

[3] *Proc.* (1898), p. 20.

was amended by the convention to strike out that part specifying that the books be printed in Illinois, and then adopted.[1] Some years later the Federation repeated its demand for free textbooks and added: "also that the free school books be uniform over the entire state." Uniformity of textbooks would in no wise impair the educational process, it was argued, and it would do away with a hardship on the working-class by making it unnecessary for a family to purchase new books each time it moved from one school district to another.[2]

Thus, the threefold policy of the Federation on schoolbooks comprised these demands: (1) uniform schoolbooks throughout the state; (2) free textbooks furnished by the state; and (3) that the union label appear on all printed matter used in the schools.[3]

About this time the Typographical Union started a drive on the non-union "schoolbook trust," and as part of its program sought to achieve state uniformity of school texts, not only in Illinois, but in other states as well. "Those who want free text books can never get free text books until uniform text books are secured," said President Wright, himself a printer. "We have a scheme laid out in the different states to all work together to beat the book trust, one of the richest and most powerful organizations in the world." Therefore, he asked the convention to drop its demand for free textbooks for the time being and concentrate on a campaign for uniformity. Judging from the fight that had been put up in the last legislature against the uniform textbook bill, said Secretary Morris, the Federation would be doing well to get that passed within the next ten years; and "you will have

[1] *Proc.* (1901), p. 13.

[2] *Proc.* (1907), p. 24.

[3] *Ibid.*

something to fight besides the school book trust when you go out for free text books in this state." Therefore, the convention of 1911 temporarily amended its policy and demanded that schoolbooks be uniform throughout the state, but not free.[1]

Thereafter President Wright kept the schoolbook issue to the fore throughout the remainder of his administration; he gave it much space in his annual reports and carried on agitation within and without the convention. He had become interested in the question when he and John C. Harding, both of Typographical 16, had been members of the Chicago School Board; and he charged that the "schoolbook trust" annually robbed the people of Illinois of at least a million dollars in the form of overcharge on books. The large companies worked together and agreed on their bids, he said. "Certain school districts are allotted to one company for the sale of readers, another company takes the geographies, another the histories . . . . and . . . . in the next school district the company that has the readers in the first district gets the geographies," so that if a parent moved from one school district to another he would have to buy new books. He presented tables to show that in Indiana, a state having a uniform schoolbook law, prices were considerably lower than in Illinois. Wright advocated that the state of Illinois produce its own texts, own the copyrights, and have them printed within the state.[2]

The legislature of 1913 failed to pass the schoolbook bills urged by the State Federation of Labor. Shortly after President Wright's retirement from office the Federation returned to its old policy of advocating free textbooks, and no longer gave first consideration to the manufacturing end

[1] *Proc.* (1911), pp. 216–17.

[2] *Proc.* (1911), p. 89; (1912), p. 20.

of the business, with which the Typographical Union was chiefly concerned.[1]

The State Federation of Labor favored compulsory education, to go hand in hand with legislation against child labor; in 1912 it wanted the compulsory age limit raised from fourteen years, as provided by the law of 1903, to sixteen years.[2] It also stood for equalization of educational opportunities and tax burdens as between districts with much taxable property and those with low valuation; this could be accomplished by means of larger grants from the state at large to the local districts.[3]

The movement for vocational education was coming to the fore during this period, and it became necessary for the State Federation to define its attitude. Matthew Woll, of the Photo Engravers' Union, brought the subject up in 1909 with a resolution protesting against a certain type of trade education being fostered by some non-union employers, and President Wright touched on the question in his last two reports.[4] A Committee on Industrial Education appointed in the convention of 1913 reported very sensibly, "We believe that this subject is too important to be considered on such short notice," and recommended that a special committee be charged with the duty of making a thorough study of the problem before the next convention, "in order that the delegates may act intelligently on this important question."[5]

[1] *Proc.* (1913), p. 30. "What are we securing from this agitation?" asked President Wright's report in 1913. "First, I am pleased to report that one of the largest school book publishing houses in the United States has unionized its plant throughout. . . . ."

[2] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 22, 166.

[3] *Proc.* (1913), p. 136.

[4] *Proc.* (1909), p. 155; (1912), p. 22; (1913), p. 33.

[5] *Proc.* (1913), p. 170.

B. TAXATION

For a year after the opening of this period the Federation retained in its platform the land monopoly and "local option in taxation" planks inserted by the single-taxers; in 1899 both were dropped, and except for a few dying echoes now and then nothing more was heard of these aggressive agitations of the nineties.[1] Trade unions in Illinois, as elsewhere in the United States, settled down after 1898 to the business of organization and collective bargaining, deciding that hopes for immediate far-reaching reform of the social system were dreams and nothing more.

C. PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

The Federation continued to advocate municipal ownership of public utilities—street railways, gas and electric plants, and water works—and government ownership of the telegraph system. It also sought enabling legislation from the state legislature when that was necessary, and expressed itself on franchise questions.[2]

Two resolutions submitted during the period asked for general indorsement of the Socialist position; no action is recorded on either of them.[3]

[1] In 1902 there was a resolution for a committee of five to investigate the relation of taxation to wages and report.—*Proc.* (1902), p. 29. In 1904 President Cohen urged trade unionists to vote for local option in taxation when that question was submitted to the voters in the fall election under the Public Policy Referendum Law. This would help to abolish the land monopoly, he said.—*Proc.* (1904).

[2] *Proc.* (1900), p. 16; (1901), p. 14; (1907), pp. 56, 30.

[3] *Proc.* (1903), pp. 25–26; (1908), p. 7. Quite a number of the United Mine Workers' delegates were professed Socialists. The resolution introduced in 1908 by John H. Walker read: "That the emancipation of the workers from industrial oppression demands the application of the principle of democracy to the business and industry of the country by the substitution of public ownership and operation, which substitution alone will make it possible to realize the ultimate aim of trade unionism, namely, 'to each worker the full value of the product of his toil.' "

D. MISCELLANEOUS LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Postal savings banks had been urged consistently by the State Federation for many years, and it continued its appeals for a safe government depository to accommodate small savings. When the Postal Savings Bank system was actually established, however, President Walker criticized it severely in his annual report, chiefly because the interest rate was placed at only 2 per cent. The "old fable as to the mountain which labored and brought forth a mouse was never better exemplified. The plan is a good one. We want it to become worthy of our Government, not an apology."[1] The Federation also favored state and national guaranty funds to protect depositors in commercial banks and gave some attention to the regulation of financial organizations such as building and loan associations; its interest was to see that the workers' savings were safe.[2]

Twice the liquor question came before the convention. A motion by Steve Sumner that delegates discourage the treating habit and encourage temperance for one year, since the treating habit had become a nuisance and a detriment to organized labor, was tabled in 1904.[3] Five years later the bartenders came to the State Federation with a large delegation and submitted a resolution stating the woes of their trade. "The fanatical movement of local option has dealt a death blow to many of the labor organizations of the state of Illinois, and in the hotel and restaurant employes and bartenders' craft alone nearly two thousand members have been deprived of a means of livelihood." They asked the Federation to announce itself as "not in accord with any movement

[1] *Proc.* (1913), pp. 34–35. See also *Proc.* (1909), p. 21; (1907), p. 46; (1908), p. 7.

[2] *Proc.* (1908), p. 5; (1911), p. 97; (1913), p. 34.

[3] *Proc.* (1904), pp. 56, 65, 72.

of well-meaning but misguided people, to prohibit the sale of liquor." There was a long and acrimonious debate. One side contended that the resolution had no place before the convention at all; "Give to the trades unionist the right to believe as he sees fit; this is a moral issue and not a labor issue"; furthermore, "it would be a God-send for labor if the local option movement swept the entire country." The other side said it was a question of employment; "if this local option is endorsed it might mean throwing out of employment great numbers of bartenders who are members of this organization." Many delegates had left the hall before the question came up—it was the evening session of the last day—but the waiters and bartenders had waited for their pet resolution, and they won the victory in votes, 109 to 68.[1] There was amusement when the delegates discovered that President Wright had presided over the meeting with a gavel made out of a huge bung starter, presented to him by the brewery-workers and bearing the union label of that craft.[2]

The Federation touched upon a wide range of subjects as its delegates brought in resolutions on issues of the day or subjects in which a few of them happened to be interested. In 1899 it urged Illinois congressmen to further the program for reclamation and settlement of arid lands sponsored by the National Irrigation Association; in 1901 it commended the proposed treaty with England regarding the Panama Canal; in 1911 the question of a deep waterway from the Lakes to the Gulf was referred to the Executive Board. Legislation requiring transportation companies to furnish ample facilities to avoid overcrowding and accident, a law compelling druggists to make out duplicate prescriptions, and a state

[1] "The conserving of their voting strength, added to the fact that a large number of delegates had left the hall, undoubtedly saved the day for the wets."—*Chicago Tribune*, October 23, 1909.

[2] *Ibid.*

tuberculosis sanitarium were all asked for in 1910. The Federation favored a law for the inspection of Chicago tenements, passed in 1905, and adopted a pure-food declaration in 1906.[1]

[1] *Proc.* (1899), p. 25; (1901), p. 16; (1911), p. 154; (1910), pp. 114, 113, 110; (1905), p. 10; (1906), p. 9.

PART III

THE PERIOD 1914–29

CONVENTIONS OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR, 1914–29

Date	Place	No. Delegates
1914	Peoria	599
1915	Alton	596
1916	Quincy	692
1917	Joliet	764
1918	Bloomington	651
1919	Peoria	605
1920	Galesburg	502
1921	Aurora	518
1922	Rockford	426
1923	Decatur	606
1924	Peoria	474
1925	Champaign-Urbana	543
1926	Streator	633
1927	East St. Louis	721
1928	Herrin	591

CHAPTER XVIII

LEADERSHIP, GROWTH, AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, 1914–29

The era since 1914 has been characterized by a continuity and stability in the affairs of the Illinois State Federation of Labor which marks it off from previous periods. The organization reached maturity shortly after the first decade in the present century; since then its internal politics have been less tumultuous, its demeanor has become relatively more staid and sober, and it has gone about its business with confidence and power.

For the last fifteen years, with the exception of a few months, John H. Walker as president and Victor A. Olander as secretary-treasurer have been at the helm of the Federation.

John Hunter Walker was born April 27, 1872, in a little town called Binnie Hill, Stirlingshire, Scotland. He landed in Braidwood, Illinois, on his ninth birthday, and just a few days before he was ten years old started working in the mines at Coal City. When John Walker began digging coal there were no effective child-labor laws, the company house was the rule, wages were paid in script to be redeemed only at the company store, and human life was cheaper than escapement shafts.

Walker's story parallels the story of the miner's union. When eleven years of age he became a member of the open branch of the Knights of Labor; at least he was enrolled and paid dues, though he was not old enough to be obligated. He belonged to the Miners' Federation and to the Mine Laborers during the careers of those organizations. Then the

United Mine Workers of America entered the field, and in the year 1896 Walker organized Local No. 505, United Mine Workers of America, at Central City, Grundy County, Illinois, a little town located between Braceville and Coal City. He has been a member in good standing ever since. He is proud of the fact that when the United Mine Workers made their first national and state contract he was present at the final conference, representing three local unions in the vicinity of his childhood.

During his rise to leadership John Walker served in every local position in the miners' union, then became a member of the subdistrict board, and later subdistrict president. Then he was a state executive board member, state vice-president, and finally for eight and one-half years, beginning in 1905, president of the Illinois Mine Workers. He also served for one year as special organizer for the state of Illinois under the direction of International President John Mitchell and for one year as international organizer. While president of the Illinois Mine Workers, Walker had a leading part in bringing about the enactment of the Miners' Qualification Law, the Shot Firer Law, and many other important parts of the mining code, and he also worked hard to help establish the Workmen's Compensation Law. In 1908 he brought the miners of the state solidly into the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and five years later they saw their leader placed at the head of the Federation.

Walker is a man of strong emotions; feeling, not logic, is the key to his spirit. Denied an opportunity for schooling, sent into the mine amid the outrageous conditions of pre-union days, fighting with his fellows for organization against ejection orders and Pinkerton detectives—no wonder he came to *feel* the labor struggle. It was this strong capacity

for emotion which made him an ardent socialist in his younger days, a leader in progressive movements, and a Labor party enthusiast. As president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor he has had to represent the big conservative unions of the cities as well as the more radical miners, and he has swung to the right with his organization.

In the legislative battles of labor John H. Walker feels and talks of "decency and humanity," leaving the subtleties of constitutional law to others. This is not to say that he is not a shrewd strategist; more than twenty years with Illinois legislatures have not gone for nothing. A likeable personality and an emotional nature make him an effective lobbyist; he can mix with politicians of all complexions in a free and easy way; he can win over wavering support to his cause; or he can flay his adversaries verbally in a committee hearing. When Walker wages battle, men and things are either black or white; but though it is his wont to denounce without mercy those whom he finds opposing measures which to him represent right and justice, he can often turn these very political enemies into friends on some later issue.

Victor A. Olander supplies talent of another sort to the Illinois State Federation of Labor. He is an executive, a careful and analytical thinker, a systematic office-man, and a dependable leader—always described by those who know him as "one of the brainiest men in the labor movement."

Born in Chicago in 1873, Victor Olander attended the public schools for about six years, worked as a factory boy about two years, and then set forth upon the Great Lakes as a sailor. In 1901 the Lake Seamen's Union selected him as one of their business agents and two years later made him their assistant secretary. In 1902 he was elected second vice-president of the International Seamen's Union of America.

In 1909 he became general secretary of the Lake Seamen's Union (now the Sailors' Union of the Great Lakes) and in 1925 secretary-treasurer of the International Seamen's Union of America. He still serves in those capacities. As a member of the national legislative committee of his union he worked with Andrew Furuseth in the halls of Congress for the emancipation of workers on the sea, a labor that was finally successful in the LaFollette Seamen's Act of 1915. Since 1914 he has been secretary-treasurer of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

Victor A. Olander, the seaman, has seen his comrades handcuffed and forced back to work or sent to jail when they refused to work. He was one of a subcommittee of three, led by Andrew Furuseth, who for nearly a quarter of a century fought a seemingly losing fight to obtain freedom for the men of the sea. And Victor A. Olander, as a legislative representative of Illinois labor, still thinks and feels in terms of freedom. Freedom is his watchword, his passion; "The Free Man and the Slave" is his constant theme. The coal-miner, liberated from dangers and privations by restrictive legislation in safety codes and anti-truck laws, may see the future of the working-class in beneficient socialistic regulation by the state; not so the sailor, to whom the law has been an iron bond of semislavery. Olander has seen the tyranny of law; he has helped seamen, denied the right to leave the ship in safe port, to escape in small boats and to elude pursuers like fugitive slaves; and he feels a deep distrust of the processes of the state. New machinery of law will not solve the problems of the laboring man, he says; given freedom, "the fundamental remedy does not lie in machinery so much as in the education and knowledge of our people."

Aided by a keen and piercing intellect, Victor A. Olander is able to follow the intricacies of legal reasoning, and he can

often best the lawyers of the Federation in analyzing the significance of judicial decisions in labor cases. He is a painstaking writer, producing articles distinguished for their clarity and precision of thought. With something of the disposition of the scholar he collects and files reference material of all sorts, and he is one of those rare trade-union leaders who know how to make use of a modern research library. He has a feeling for poetry, is widely read in its literature, and collects striking fragments of finely phrased prose. A man of outstanding ability and absolute integrity, respected by friend and foe alike, his is "one of the ablest minds and finest spirits in the American labor movement."[1]

In 1916 when John H. Walker entered the race for the presidency of his international union—the United Mine Workers of America—he announced that he would not be a candidate for re-election in the State Federation. The convention expressed regret at his retirement, and with the possibility in mind that he might not be successful in his candidacy for the highest office in his union, it instructed the Executive Board to "make every effort to secure the aid of John Walker whenever possible in legislation and other work of the Federation.[2] James F. Morris, of Springfield, who had been secretary of the Federation from 1901 till 1913, was nominated and elected without opposition to the vacant post as president; but when Walker failed to carry the miners' election Morris asked leave to withdraw, and the Executive Board requested President Walker to continue in office.[3] Again in 1918 Walker was a candidate for the chieftainship of the United Mine Workers. This time George L. Mercer

[1] Fred Atkins Moore, introducing Victor A. Olander at the Chicago Forum, November 14, 1926.

[2] *Proc.* (1916), pp. 221, 230.

[3] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 70–71. This arrangement was approved by the next convention.—*Ibid.*, pp. 241, 279.

and Duncan McDonald, both miners, contested for the State Federation presidency, and McDonald was successful by a vote of 39,767 to 38,522.[1] McDonald did not resign in favor of Walker as Mercer probably would have done, but at the wish of the Executive Board and with the approval of the president-elect, John Walker continued to represent the Federation at the capitol throughout the remainder of the 1919 legislative session.[2]

Duncan McDonald, who thus headed the Illinois State Federation of Labor for one year, was a prominent leader of the Illinois miners and had been secretary-treasurer of their state organization. A thorough socialist and a staunch labor party man, he did not take kindly to "begging for favors," as he thought of it, at the hands of rival politicians. He was for independent political action in which labor might rise up and assert its rights with dignity. Idealist in everything, he devoted much energy to promoting the co-operative movement in Illinois. Like "Tommy" Morgan, his socialist politics tended to keep him from rising as far as he might have otherwise in the trade unions; he and Gompers used to enjoy fighting every time they met. He would not compromise on principles. Some few years ago he became obnoxious to the administration of the miners' union and was forced out; today he runs a book and art store in Springfield.

At the next election Walker defeated McDonald for the State Federation presidency, and since that time President Walker, like Secretary Olander, has been re-elected consistently without opposition.

The following table reveals something of the changing makeup of the annual conventions of the Illinois State Federation of Labor during this period:

[1] *Weekly News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation of Labor (hereafter abbreviated *WN*), January 18, 1919.

[2] *WN*, March 15, p. 4; interview, Duncan McDonald.

ATTENDANCE AT ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTIONS, 1914–28*

	Total Number Of Delegates	Number From City Central Bodies	Number From Chicago	Delegations Of	
				Miners	Teamsters
1914, Peoria	599	63	170	199	43
1915, Alton	596	72	173	145	44
1916, Quincy	692	63	222	124	55
1917, Joliet	764	70	264	200	81
1918, Bloomington	651	54	204	223	62
1919, Peoria	605	47	192	152	73
1920, Galesburg	502	51	196	120	73
1921, Aurora	518	50	186	135	67
1922, Rockford	426	42	201	86	88
1923, Decatur	606	45	277	145	114
1924, Peoria	474	42	282	120	112
1925, Champaign-Urbana	543	43	284	100	103
1926, Streator	633	43	340	93	143
1927, East St. Louis	721	46	405	77	163
1928, Herrin	591	39	323	80	150

*Source: reports of Credentials Committees, annual *Proceedings*.

Note that the city central bodies, which were the backbone of the Federation in the early days, now play a minor part. Since 1924 a majority of the delegates in each convention have hailed from Chicago; this situation was the rule in the eighties, but from 1890 to 1924 it occurred only once—in 1902 when the seceding Chicago teamsters were admitted. The miners, who at the beginning of this period could almost rule the convention with their huge delegation, have attended in less numbers since the war; their organization has been troubled with costly strikes and lockouts as well as internal dissension. The teamsters, in fact, have taken from them of late the distinction of having the largest delegation in the convention. In 1927 the carpenters also, with eighty-nine delegates, outnumbered the miners.[1]

[1] The largest delegations in the 1927 convention were: teamsters, 163; carpenters, 89; mine-workers, 77; hod-carriers, 31; painters, 35; brick-workers and clay-workers, 25; barbers, 23. The startling changes since the eighties and nineties are evident when it is noted that the Cigarmakers' and the Typographical Unions,

It is quite evident that year by year since the after-war depression, with the waning of the miners and the rising influence of the teamsters and other Chicago groups, control has been passing into the hands of the big city unions. This means a more conservative attitude, straight "business unionism" in the ascendancy, for the mine-workers have been the chief apostles of progressive or radical policies in the past.

Since the conventions have become so large, almost too large for the convenient transaction of business, the number of delegates attending is not as good an index of the membership growth of the State Federation of Labor as it used to be. For the period since 1914 a much more reliable indicator is available in the annual receipts from per capita tax[1] shown in the table on page 315.

The table shows that the Federation enjoyed a steady growth until the depression era after the war;[2] then the trade-union movement throughout the land received a setback. Some national organizations were smashed altogether; practically every union had its numbers greatly reduced. Consequently, the affiliations and financial receipts of the State Federation declined, but in the last few years the Illinois State Federation of Labor has more than recouped

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two mainstays of the Federation in its early years, were represented by 6 delegates and 15 delegates, respectively, at this convention, and in 1925 the Cigarmakers' Union sent only 2 delegates.

[1] The annual average tax-paying membership, computed by dividing the total receipts from the per capita tax by the rate per member, is subject to fluctuations from other causes than actual alterations in the affiliation roll of the Federation, it must be remembered. Unions do not pay tax on unemployed members or on those engaged in trade disputes; therefore an industrial depression, or a strike in the coal fields, reduces the membership of the Federation for the year when computed on this basis. Furthermore, some unions pay tax to the State Federation on only part of their actual memberships, though this is a violation of the laws of the Federation.

[2] The decrease in average tax-paying membership in 1917–18 probably means that some unions objected to the higher tax rate and either dropped out of the Federation temporarily or reduced the number of members on which they paid.

these losses, and now boasts the largest membership and greatest financial strength in its history. The success of the Injunction Limitation Bill in 1925 brought increased interest in the work of the Federation and resulted in many new affiliations.[1]

TAX RECEIPTS AND AVERAGE DUES-PAYING MEMBERSHIP OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR 1914–28*

Fiscal Year Ending in Autumn of:	Per Capita Tax Receipts	Tax per Member per Year	Average Tax-Paying Membership for the Year
1914	$15,294	$ .12	127,500
1915	16,260	.12	135,500
1916	17,313	.12	144,275
1917	20,291	.20†	101,455†
1918	20,671	.20	103,355
1919	34,941	.20	175,000
1920	47,428	.28†	169,400†
1921	51,495	.28	183,900
1922	38,473	.28	137,400
1923	39,346	.28	140,500
1924	44,741	.28	159,800
1925	43,559	.28	155,600
1926	49,059	.28	175,200
1927	52,935	.28	189,000
1928	57,500	.40‡	169,000§

*Source: reports of secretary-treasurer, annual *Proceedings*.

†Doubtful, because of transition to new tax rate.

‡The old tax rate was in force for six months and the new for six months, making an average rate of $0.34, which was used in the computation.

§This figure is much less than the actual affiliated membership of the Federation, because the miners' difficulties deprived the Federation of their tax payments for some time. The same is true to a less extent, and for similar reasons, of many of the other figures in this column.

In the first convention of this period the Committee on Law reported that there was need for a "careful and studious revision of the whole constitution," and a special committee submitted a new draft to the delegates at Alton in 1915.[2] This new constitution did not change the scheme of organization of the Federation nor differ from the old in essential particulars, but it provided in greater detail for the smooth

[1] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 214–17.

[2] *Proc.* (1914), p. 223; (1915), pp. 40, 152, 172, 182.

functioning of the larger and more responsible organization that the Federation had become. The Executive Board was henceforth to consist of nine vice-presidents, ranked from first to ninth, as in the American Federation of Labor. Salaries of the president and the secretary-treasurer were fixed at $200 a month and traveling expenses; Executive Board members or members of special committees were allowed $6 a day and expenses while on Federation work.[1] The president was required to make a legislative report after each session of the General Assembly, including voting records of legislators on labor bills. Publication of a weekly news letter became one of the duties of the officers. There was sharp debate over the provision first introduced in 1907 which made any employer or anyone with power to hire or discharge ineligible to sit as a delegate in the convention; but the miners and those of like opinion had their way and the section was included.[2] A suggestion by the committee that the constitution be amendable by a two-thirds vote was rejected; it can be changed at any convention by a simple

[1] These amounts have since been raised to $6,500 a year for the two full-time officers and $10 a day for Executive Board and committee members.—*Proc.* (1917), pp. 245, 278; (1920), pp. 264–70; (1927), p. 131.

[2] The miners were strongly for this rule; it was opposed by printers, carpenters, and members of other trades in which it was found necessary to include foremen in the unions. Matthew Woll questioned the legality of such an interference with the autonomy of affiliated unions; he thought the question might be appealed to the American Federation of Labor. The painters held a meeting between sessions to discuss the possible effect of such a provision; one delegate said the rule might cause the withdrawal of the building trades if adopted without modification. Delegate Bruce of the Street Railway Employees summed up the situation concisely when he said it was "largely caused by a misunderstanding, or rather a lack of charity on the part of some organizations for the troubles of others. The carpenter is compelled by conditions in his trade to have the foreman belong to the union. The street car men and the miners are compelled by conditions they have faced many times to keep them out of the union. The cigar-makers and barbers have even the men who run shops belonging to their unions, and they are compelled to do that because sometimes they are the only working men in the shops."—*Proc.* (1915), pp. 45, 152–60.

majority. The convention itself remains supreme, not bound by any "fundamental law" framed by its predecessors; the constitution of the Illinois State Federation of Labor is to be regarded as a set of guiding rules, particularly important for the conduct of the organization between conventions.

In fairness to Chicago unions, which were coming into the Federation in increasing numbers, the provision that no more than one vice-president might come from the same city or town was removed in 1916; no two may represent the same trade or calling, however.[1] The rule barring political office-holders from office in the Federation was modified in 1919 with the hope that the Labor party might elect someone; it was made to provide that no person holding a salaried position, elective or appointive, by grace of any political party not indorsed by the Illinois State Federation of Labor should be eligible to office in the Federation.[2] Since 1921, instead of entering nominations for first vice-president, second vice-president, and so on, all vice-presidential candidates have been voted on together and the one receiving the most votes becomes first vice-president, the next second vice-president, and the rest in order.[3] To make matters absolutely clear to the left wing, the convention of 1925 amended Article I by adding that the Federation "shall at all times comply with the laws of the American Federation of Labor," and in 1927 a statement on the "Jurisdiction and Procedure of State Federations" was adopted.[4]

The revenue system of an organization like the Illinois State Federation of Labor is very important, for most of its activities are limited by the income available for printing, postage, stenographic help, salaries, and traveling expense. As confidence in the Federation has grown, and as prices and

[1] *Proc.* (1916), p. 287.
[2] *Proc.* (1919), p. 344.
[3] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 328 f.
[4] *Proc.* (1925), p. 104; (1927), pp. 207, 65, 123.

wages have gone upward during the last fifteen years, the per capita tax rate has been increased—first from 1 cent a member a month to 5 cents a quarter or 1 2/5 cents a month in 1917, then to 7 cents a quarter in 1919, and finally to 10 cents a quarter in 1927.[1] Central bodies or district and state councils chartered as central bodies pay a flat rate of $10.00 a year. The present constitution prescribes an initiation fee of $5.00 for each organization, or $2.50 for organizations composed exclusively of women. In addition to regular dues, the Federation handles certain sums each year in the way of donations for special causes. Thus, the secretary-treasurer's report for 1927 showed total receipts of $58,000.00, of which $53,000.00 came from per capita tax, $435.00 from initiation fees, $66.00 from miscellaneous sources, while the remainder—$4,600.00 was made up of donations under such heads as "Soderstrom Defense Fund," "Florida Relief Fund," "Granite City Strike Fund," "Radio Station Fund," and "Flood Relief Fund."

Only once since 1914 has a special assessment been levied. That was in 1922 when the Rockford convention removed the 5 cent limit on such assessments from its laws and levied 25 cents a member to defeat the proposed new state constitution. This unusual tax was collected, in spite of the protests of a few unions, and the next convention refused to seat delegates from organizations that had not paid.[2] The 1923 convention adopted a constitutional rule

[1] *Proc.* (1917), p. 300; (1919), pp. 299, 345; (1927), p. 94.

[2] The matter aroused considerable discussion as to whether the Federation was a voluntary or a compulsory organization, and as to a conflict of laws between the action of the Federation and a provision of the Painters' national constitution which required all special assessments to go to a referendum vote. It was generally agreed, however, that in view of the seriousness of the threat to labor involved in the proposed state constitution an assessment of the sort was justified. —*Proc.* (1923), pp. 271–86. The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor upheld the action of the Illinois State Federation when the question was carried to it by Painters' Local No. 147 of Chicago.—See *WN*, May 30, 1925.

that any regular or special convention might levy an assessment of not to exceed 15 cents a member in any one year, and that the Executive Board, in case of emergency, might call for $5.00 from each affiliated organization.[1]

Quite as important as changes in the law itself has been the regularization of the Federation's income brought about by the efforts of Secretary Olander. When he took office many organizations still paid their dues before conventions in amounts large enough to qualify them for seating delegates, and then ceased paying until next convention time. Mr. Olander began to enforce the rules and gradually cut down the large preconvention payments until they became negligible items. Today all affiliated organizations remain in the Federation the year round and pay tax regularly.[2]

One of the most important and most controversial issues connected with the laws of the Federation during this period has been the method of electing officers. Following the instructions of the previous convention, the Executive Board in 1914 submitted a plan for the conduct of referendum elections, and after much discussion in which the miners fought earnestly for the referendum principle while opposing groups led by the teamsters and some of the building trades fought just as earnestly to defeat it, the question was left to a vote of the membership at large.[3] The referendum plan advocated by the miners was approved, and the old system of convention election was abandoned in 1915.

There were vigorous battles for the repeal of the referendum plan of election in the Federation conventions of

[1] *Proc.* (1923), pp. 486–87.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 282; (1927), p. 95; interview, V. A. Olander. Some unions, however, still report only part of their total membership when paying per capita tax to the State Federation. This is contrary to rules, but the officers so far have felt compelled to overlook it rather than risk the loss of these affiliations entirely.—See President Walker's statement in *Proc.* (1927), p. 102.

[3] *Proc.* (1914), pp. 204–21.

1916, 1918, 1919, and 1922. Opponents of the system, like Robert G. Fitchie and George W. Briggs, of the teamsters, Bruce, of the street-railway employees, Charles Dold, and Matthew Woll, argued that it was very expensive in big Chicago locals, that the referendum might be suitable for use in an organization including men of only one calling but not in a Federation, that not enough members participated in a referendum to make it representative,[1] that in some locals the officers "plumped" all the votes without ever sending them out to the membership at large, that the rank and file had no opportunity to know the qualifications of candidates and generally voted according to the advice of convention delegates anyway, and that the plan consumed a great deal of the secretary-treasurer's time which might better be put to other uses. Advocates of the referendum, led by such men as John H. Walker, Duncan McDonald, and Allan Haywood of the miners, replied that the referendum was democratic, that it would look queer to the public if labor organizations agitated for direct national and state elections and refused to apply the same principle in their own organizations, and, most important of all, that it kept electioneering out of the conventions. Some of the objections based on expense and inconvenience were met by lengthening the terms of officers; since 1922 elections have been held every two years instead of annually. Under this arrangement, and with certain improvements in the details of the referendum system, its opponents have given up the fight to have it repealed.

In its results, the referendum method of election has tended to lengthen the tenure of Federation officers and has

[1] The tellers reported in 1927 that they had tabulated 93,769 ballots. The average tax-paying membership of the Federation in that year was approximately 189,000. In other words, about half the members voted.—Source of figures: "Report of Secretary-Treasurer," in *Proc.* (1927).

given more power to the miners than they might have exerted otherwise. Above all, it has removed from the annual conventions a potent source of distraction, petty political manipulation, and friction. All testimony agrees that so long as elections were held in the convention everything else revolved around that one event. John C. Harding said in 1914 that in every convention he had attended "for three or four days we simply log rolled for the election, and then for about five or six hours on the closing day we did business."[1] The climax came toward the end of President Wright's administration. For several years Wright's friends kept him in office by bringing carloads of delegates from Chicago; the Chicago delegation would come down the day before the election and go back the next. Then the miners, supporting Walker, adopted similar tactics, and it was freely admitted that at Decatur in 1913, when Walker was first elected, telegrams went out to various miners' locals for more delegates. "To the Federation as a whole," remarked President Wright in his retiring speech, "I would like to say if there is any way of getting the same energy into the trade union movement that we put into the election of officers . . . . Illinois would be just one step down from Heaven."[2] Election of officers by referendum has brought about a noticeable change in the attitude of the annual convention. Duncan McDonald contrasted the old spirit with the new in 1918: "When we got to the convention city," he said, recalling a session fifteen years before, "we were invited to a little caucus and the door was locked. They had a fellow watching the door to see that no one heard our plans . . . . . There wasn't five minutes from the time I got there until the election was over but somebody was hauling me out in the lobby

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 217.

[2] *Proc.* (1913), p. 215.

to ask that his friend be nominated. As soon as the elections were over the hotels were empty." It was different now. "Since you have taken the election of officers out of the convention the delegates have come here to transact business, and they remain until the convention is over."[1]

[1] *Proc.* (1918), p. 248.

CHAPTER XIX

OPERATING AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

THE CONVENTION

Conventions of several hundred delegates are necessarily more formal, less intimate and personal than those of sixty or seventy-five which used to conduct the work of the State Federation in the nineties. More of the business is transacted in committees which meet two days prior to the opening session and sit until midnight during convention week. Detailed reports of the officers—sometimes nearly a hundred pages of printing—come to the delegates' hands on the first day. The secretary receives advance copies of resolutions to be introduced and has them printed; stenographic reports of the previous day's proceedings are distributed each morning. It now takes a full week to act on all the business within the province of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The organization and duties of the governing body of the Federation between conventions have not undergone great change since 1914, but it meets more often and handles more business. There were six meetings of the Executive Board, for example, between the conventions of 1926 and 1927. On occasion, board members have been detailed to do special organizing or legislative work; at times one of their number is employed steadily for six or eight months.[1]

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

THE PRESIDENT

The constitution makes the president the presiding officer at conventions, chairman of the Executive Board, and delegate from the State Federation to the American Federation of Labor conventions. He is chairman of the Joint Labor Legislative Board and has charge of the legislative work of the Federation. With the approval of the Executive Board, he may appoint assistants and organizers. The constitution requires him to visit all affiliated locals and central bodies at least twice each year, if possible.

President Walker's office is in the Mine Workers' Building at Springfield, and while the General Assembly is in session his time is occupied in that city with matters pertaining to labor's interests at the capitol. At other times he travels over the state, addressing meetings, assisting in organizing campaigns, helping to settle disputes and to win strikes. It would be futile to attempt to enumerate the multitudinous activities in which the president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor engages; they range all the way from participation in church conferences to those little diplomatic moves and private understandings which go along with practical politics.

In 1914 President Walker reported to the convention that most of his time had been spent in organization work, since the legislature was not in session. He had sent out circulars and spoken to local unions urging them to join the Federation. He had helped to bring warring factions of the teamsters together at Witt, Illinois; he had assisted unions at Harrisburg and Hillsboro, and the leather-workers on horse goods in Chicago, to obtain agreements with employers. At Canton, Royalton, Hillsboro, and Harrisburg he had organized central bodies and federal labor unions, and had lent what help he could to the waiters in Chicago, the

teamsters at Ottawa, and the bakers and building trades in Springfield. In addition, he had addressed at least two hundred meetings in the interest of the trade union and co-operative movements. Among them were three legislative conventions of the railway brotherhoods, a meeting of the locomotive engineers at Chicago, a farmers' state convention, a state convention of the bricklayers at Ottawa, the international convention of the United Mine Workers, and the steam and operating engineers meeting at Peoria.[1]

During 1925 he addressed about fifty meetings of local unions, central bodies, label leagues, joint councils, colleges, churches, and conventions, debated the child-labor amendment with John M. Glenn, of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, before a class in economics at the University of Illinois and with another representative of the manufacturers before the Springfield Women's Club, debated the military police bill before the Forum Club, of Decatur, and conducted the usual political work, the legislative campaign, and the organizing activities of the Federation.[2]

Under Presidents Cohen and Wright the customary "President's Address" had gradually become a formal report of considerable length and increasing range. President Walker expanded the president's report still further, until now it represents not only a survey of the Federation's activities during the year, but also a review of general conditions in industry of interest to the trade-union movement, specific and general recommendations, and even reprints or quotations from speeches, government or trade-union reports, and books considered worth the attention of the delegates. Recently President Walker has suggested that the Executive Board as a whole take over the task of presenting a report to the annual convention, thus following

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 10.

[2] *Proc.* (1925), p. 205.

the precedent of the American Federation of Labor. The time of the president is becoming overcrowded, and a report would have greater authority if compiled by more than one person. This recommendation was adopted by the Streator convention, but was not carried into effect owing to the lack of funds caused by a stoppage in the coal industry.[1]

THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

A great expansion in the activities of the secretary-treasurer's office, due to the energy and administrative genius of Victor A. Olander, has been one of the outstanding developments in the Illinois State Federation of Labor since 1914. He established his office in Chicago, thus giving the Federation both a Springfield and a Chicago headquarters. For a time the services of one stenographer were shared with the Women's Trade Union League; at present two and sometimes three are employed full time at Chicago, in addition to one in the president's office at Springfield.

Of course, there are many routine duties connected with the office of the secretary-treasurer.[2] But such work has been

[1] *Proc.* (1926), pp. 244, 143; (1927), p. 172.

[2] He must care for the finances of the Federation. In the years for the election of officers, nomination report blanks, notifications to candidates, ballots, and return sheets have to be sent out, and these result in a flood of correspondence. Election returns are received in sealed envelopes, the date of receipt is recorded, and the envelopes are submitted to the tellers, who compile the vote. In the early summer of each year the secretary must get in touch with the local central body in the city where the convention is to be held, procure a convention hall, make arrangements for hotel accommodations, and provide for many other details. The annual convention call and credential blanks go to all affiliated organizations in August, and Secretary Olander has also made it a rule to take advantage of this period of greater interest in the Federation by communicating with unaffiliated organizations asking them to join. The secretary's office must receive and tabulate credentials and prepare delegates' cards, receive resolutions, point out necessary corrections in them, and prepare many other details in such manner as to avoid inconvenience, delay, and confusion when the convention meets. An official stenographic report of the convention proceedings has to be made; Mrs. East, who reports con-

thoroughly organized and is confided almost entirely to assistants. Miss Halo Hibbard, who has made herself invaluable in the secretary's office since 1918, looks after most of the routine business; and Miss Marian Fuller, bookkeeper for the Federation, keeps the record of affiliations and tax payments and compiles the statistical and financial information incorporated in the annual report of the secretary-treasurer. Secretary Olander himself is thus enabled to undertake a great many important activities beyond the regular duties of his office.

He has made the Chicago office of the Federation a bureau of information and advice for the trade-union movement of the state, particularly on matters connected with legislation and legal issues. Publications and reports of many kinds are collected or clipped and filed; and a considerable amount of research on special topics is carried on. Prior to the meeting of the state constitutional convention Secretary Olander secured copies of every state constitution in the country and analyzed their provisions, especially those sections known as the "Bill of Rights." During the constabulary agitation he obtained copies of all the laws of the United States providing for a state police force in any form, and also collected information regarding methods used in foreign countries. The Committee on Officers' Reports in 1921 told the convention that "the defeat of the State Constabulary Bill . . . . was due, more than any other cause, to the fact that Secretary Olander had gathered the

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ventions of the American Federation of Labor and many international unions, has done this work for the Illinois Federation for more than twenty years. After adjournment, the record is published, and Secretary Olander has added an index. Then instructions given by the convention have to be examined, resolutions sent where ordered, and a record of matters referred to the Executive Board prepared for its use. Many times the secretary's office is called upon to circularize the state on subjects of importance to the trade-union movement, or to assist affiliated unions in similar work.

widest possible information on all matters in connection with this subject, and was able to present it in the most forceful and convincing manner." The Illinois State Federation has probably gathered more data and compiled more information and argument on the use of injunctions in labor disputes than any other similar body; its material is constantly being furnished to the labor movement of other states. "It is by work such as this," the same Committee on Officers' Reports observed, "that the Illinois Federation of Labor has gained the reputation of being the greatest State Federation in our country."[1]

While the legislature is in session the secretary-treasurer assists the president in hearings and conferences at Springfield and returns to Chicago a few days at a time to care for correspondence and office work. He also makes many public speeches to groups inside and outside the trade-union movement, participates in all sorts of civic conferences, meets an amazing variety of callers, and does hundreds of little things on behalf of the trade-union movement. A single day may bring in a stream of visitors like the following:

An employee discharged with back wages withheld; wants advice.

A congressman from Illinois dropping in for a chat.

The head of the state division of labor statistics, to confer about some new kinds of data which it might be desirable to compile.

A candidate for the state legislature who hopes to receive the indorsement of organized labor.

The principal of a Chicago high school, to discuss the junior high school and its influence.

A girl from Northwestern University preparing for a debate on old-age pensions; debaters never go away empty-handed.

The business agent of a union on strike, seeking advice regarding an injunction just issued against them.

Secretary Nockels, of the Chicago Federation, in from the next office to ask Mr. Olander to testify on the community benefits resulting

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 314.

from labor organization in an injunction and "yellow-dog" contract case before a United States court.

The director of the state Department of Labor to discuss means by which the Federation may co-operate with the department to inform working people of their rights and how to claim them under the Workmen's Compensation Law.

An announcer from WCFL to arrange for a radio talk.

An officer of the Teachers' Union, to discuss school matters.

THE WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

When Secretary Olander took office he found that it was very difficult to maintain even a correct mailing list of the secretaries of affiliated unions, and he decided that some means must be invented by which to preserve closer contact between the Federation and member organizations. A mimeographed news sheet, first sent to labor papers and then to all affiliated unions, soon developed into a printed circular named the *Weekly News Letter*, and the effect upon the work of the Federation was so helpful that the publication has been continued regularly since 1915. It is now a regular four-page paper, but sometimes six or eight and occasionally twelve pages are printed. About twenty-five hundred copies go out each week[1] to the secretaries of affiliated organizations, delegates to the latest convention, local legislative committees, politicians, interested trade-union officials, and a few friends outside the labor movement.

Since 1921 no subscription price has been charged. Payment of per capita tax entitles each organization to the *News Letter*, and its cost is taken out of the general fund. This amounts to little more than would be spent for postage, printing, and stenographic work on official notices, reports, and financial statements which are now circulated through this medium. Secretary Olander has constantly emphasized

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

that the *News Letter* is primarily designed to furnish a channel through which the secretary-treasurer's office may readily communicate reports and general information to the secretaries of affiliated bodies. "It is in no sense a competitor of other labor papers because it is not intended for general circulation. The policy of our *Weekly News Letter* has been to encourage and assist the local papers rather than to compete with them."[1]

In addition to routine organization matters, such as itemized financial statements and minutes of the Executive Board and the Joint Labor Legislative Board, the *News Letter* carries special articles on legislative and trade-union topics, campaign appeals, news items of general interest to the movement, and the records of political candidates. Secretary Olander has also followed the policy of publishing in the *News Letter*, in full, the texts of important labor decisions in the courts of the United States and of Illinois, the texts of many labor bills introduced in the General Assembly or in Congress, the texts of noteworthy injunction orders, and other documents valuable for reference purposes.

The Illinois State Federation of Labor is the only state federation which furnishes a regular weekly information service of this sort. In recent years certain other state federations of labor have inaugurated a similar service on a monthly basis. It is probable that eventually all other state federations will follow the example set by the Illinois Federation in this respect.[2]

SPECIAL COMMITTEES; RESEARCH

Quite often the convention provides for a special interim committee to study a particular problem and report the following year, and some reports so prepared have been

[1] "Secretary's Report," *Proc.* (1920), p. 36.

[2] Interview, V. A. Olander.

really valuable—notably, the report of the Committee on Vocational Education in 1914, the report of the Committee on Unemployment in 1916, and the report of the Committee on Occupational Diseases in 1924. Unfortunately, some interim committees have never functioned at all.

At present Secretary Olander, who has an aptitude for such work, compiles much information for the Federation; but the time he can devote to this function is limited. President Walker has intimated that at some future time the Federation hopes to establish a research bureau;[1] and perhaps one of the next steps in the development of its operating agencies will be a department designed to collect and analyze data to aid the convention in formulating policies and to aid the officers in preparing and promoting legislative measures.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT ATTEMPTED

In 1916 the Illinois State Federation of Labor embarked with the Chicago Federation upon a project for a joint legal department to fight injunctions, to give advice on the drafting of legislative measures, and to perform other legal services. W. B. Rubin, of Milwaukee, agreed to serve as chief counsel, and Frank P. Walsh, of Kansas City, Clarence Darrow, of Chicago, and Angus W. Kerr, of the Illinois Mine Workers' counsel, were associated with him on the staff. Attorney Fred Schmidt, of Chicago, was employed to care for the office work and details.

"If there is one thing our trade-union movement is weak in, it is our legal efforts," said John P. Frey, of Ohio, in congratulating the 1916 convention on this action. Trade unions had been careless in drafting their legislative proposals, and,

[1] *Proc.* (1924), p. 414. He was pleading at the time for affiliated unions to pay per capita tax on their full memberships, if they would all do this there would be money for such purposes.

more important, they had been "almost criminally negligent" in their attitude toward labor questions in the courts. "We are always the defendants, the employer is always the prosecutor. We have got to change that." A legal department might help to turn the tables.[1]

The new Legal Department functioned for a little more than a year and performed valuable services. Nevertheless, the income of the Federation was not sufficient to sustain the extra expense, and the Legal Department was inclined, in the opinion of Federation officials, to interfere too much with the policies of the organization. The venture was abandoned in 1917.[2]

[1] *Proc.* (1916), p. 141.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 61, 276.

CHAPTER XX

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Legislative and political efforts have overshadowed other forms of activity in the Illinois State Federation of Labor's program, but it is worth while to note some of the non-legislative ways in which the Federation has aided the trade-union movement since 1914.

ORGANIZATION

The work of the president and his assistants contributes toward organizing the workers of the state.[1] The annual conventions quicken the spirit of union labor in the convention cities, help by their patronage to unionize restaurants, barber-shops, and cigar stores, and bring the encouragement and advice of experienced leaders in every craft to the aid of the local unions. During the war the State Federation's influence with the State Council of Defense helped to bring about favorable settlement of many disputes, and in the threat of the after-war depression the Federation exerted itself to stem the open-shop drive.[2]

[1] For example, the machinists thanked President Walker and the Federation in 1914 for "splendid assistance" in unionizing certain shops in Alton and Belleville. The Chicago teachers had the active co-operation of the Federation, particularly through Secretary Olander, in their struggle with the Chicago School Board over the right to organize, beginning in 1915. The Federation donated $200 to the Women's Trade Union League in 1914 and co-operated in establishing a union among the nurses and attendants in several public institutions of the state. The Executive Board worked with the metal-polishers, the bartenders, the butchers, and other trades in organizing and conducting strikes; and the convention at Joliet in 1917 took part in a big parade to boost the machinists' campaign among the steel-workers.—*Proc.* (1914), p. 247; (1915), p. 200; (1916), p. 70; (1914), p. 38; (1915), p. 161; (1916), p. 256; (1917), p. 204.

[2] See chapter xxi.

One of the standing committees of the annual State Federation conventions is the Committee on Organization. Its report consists largely of resolutions submitted by unions which wish the added prestige of an indorsement from the state labor body in an organizing campaign, strike, or lockout, or which are advertising the "unfairness" of certain firms. Such resolutions are adopted as a matter of course if they come from bona fide trade-union sources and do not conflict with the interests of any other union.

BOYCOTTS

There is little to be added to the discussion in Part II regarding the Federation's part in boycotts. The Organization Committee reports resolutions on "unfair" firms, and the delegates and officers give them publicity. The State Federation makes some effort at settlement in practically every boycott campaign it indorses,[1] but for the most part it merely helps to advertise them and leaves the actual conduct of the dispute in the hands of the national union concerned.

THE UNION LABEL

Union-label activities of the Federation have also continued much as in the previous period, but there has been one new development in connection with the competition of non-union coal mined in Kentucky and West Virginia from which the union miners and operators of Illinois have suffered. Unfortunately, it is not feasible to put a union label on each chunk of coal, but the Illinois mine-workers and the State Federation have hit on a better plan. They have inaugurated a vigorous "Buy Illinois Coal" campaign, pointing out to their friends that to buy Illinois coal means to buy union-mined coal.[2] In fact, this slogan may be more effective than

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] *Proc.* (1926), p. 114; (1927), pp. 82, 266.

a direct appeal to use union-mined coal, for it probably appeals to the provincial patriotism of people who have no thought of aiding the labor movement. The assistance of the state government has been secured in the shape of a "Buy-Illinois-Products Commission" created by the legislature in 1927.[1]

STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS

The State Federation helps striking unions to raise funds, and sometimes makes a direct donation itself. In 1915 there was a proposal that appeals for the aid of strikers should be replaced by a permanent defense fund, but the suggestion was rejected.[2]

President Walker often reports to the convention on strikes over the state, particularly where the workers are poorly organized or confronted by difficult situations; he frequently renders valuable assistance by conducting negotiations for them with employers, conferring with them on matters of strategy or perchance bringing political influence to bear. The case of the striking fluorspar miners at Rosiclare was taken up by the Federation in 1916; President Walker's report described the terrorism of gunmen against which he found them pitted; and the convention addressed a communication on the subject to Governor Dunne.[3] A telephone strike was on in Galesburg when the convention met there in 1920, and a committee rendered all the assistance it could.[4] The great steel strike of 1919 excited the Federation more than any other conflict during the period, and it did its best for the cause of the strikers.[5]

[1] See chap. xxviii, section IIA of legislative summary.

[2] *Proc.* (1915), p. 253.

[3] *Proc.* (1916), pp. 57, 303. There was another strike at Rosiclare in 1921–22 in which the Federation again assisted.—*Proc.* (1921), pp. 240, 357; (1922), p. 289.

[4] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 277 f.

[5] See chap. xxi.

THE FEDERATION AND UNION DISPUTES

The settled policy of the State Federation of Labor is not to take sides in internal disputes or jurisdictional battles involving international unions; it recognizes that the American Federation of Labor is the proper authority to settle such difficulties. Nevertheless, it did break over in 1914–16 by admitting a seceding faction of brick-makers while their case was pending before the American Federation of Labor. The Federation championed their cause, helped to bring about conferences, and by the time of the Quincy convention the United Brick and Clay Workers had won their case and could be seated regularly.[1] Similarly, when a bitter battle developed in the building trades of Chicago after the Landis Award the Illinois State Federation of Labor resolved to "enter a vigorous protest" with the American Federation of Labor against a certain decision rendered by a group of international presidents in the building trades unions, though both President Walker and Secretary Olander argued that a state federation had no right to take sides on any question involving the internal affairs of international unions.[2] Subsequently the officers did what they could to minimize the antagonism between the warring factions.[3]

THE STATE FEDERATION AND UNION POLICIES

Though the Federation acknowledges its lack of authority to intervene in the internal affairs of any affiliated organization, it cannot refrain from now and then discussing

[1] In 1914 they were seated as regular delegates in the convention, but at Alton a year later the Federation took the precaution to admit them only as "fraternal delegates."—*Proc.* (1914), p. 57; (1915), pp. 32–39, 250; (1916), pp. 56, 209.

[2] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 298 f., 302, 204.

[3] *Proc.* (1923), p. 95. In 1921 the Federation added a Committee on Building Trades to its list of standing committees. Most of its reports have dealt with legislation designed to reduce the peculiar hazards of the building industry.

policies of general interest and making recommendations on them.

In 1917, for example, a molder introduced a resolution against the piecework system of payment. The differences of opinion which arose illustrate the difficulty encountered in any attempt to frame general declarations of policy applying to all industries and crafts. The miners were strongly in favor of piecework; the machinists were not. A Committee on Piecework and Bonus authorized to study the problem and report to the next convention decided that "the piecework system . . . . has almost as many angles as there are trades affected"; some found it fair and profitable to the worker, others complained of it bitterly. The committee did agree, however, in denouncing the bonus whole-heartedly; it was said to be a system for speeding-up, designed as a palliative to discourage organization and prevent a real wage increase.[1]

The convention of 1916 indorsed a principle submitted by the Women's Trade Union League that "the wage paid for definite work must be absolutely independent of the sex of the individual performing it." It also viewed with suspicion the physical examinations and medical services being installed by many large corporations and instructed the president to appoint a committee to investigate the subject.[2] At East St. Louis in 1927 the Federation indorsed the five-day week and recommended that local unions seek to secure it as part of their agreements. The argument used was "overproduction."[3]

The Illinois State Federation of Labor, like the American Federation of Labor, has taken a strong stand in favor of the

[1] *Proc.* (1918), pp. 279–85; (1917), p. 153.

[2] *Proc.* (1916), pp. 242, 233–34. The writer finds no further trace of this committee.

[3] *Proc.* (1927), p. 164.

organization of negro as well as white workers, and it deprecates the rules of some international unions which bar negroes from membership. Resolutions to this effect were adopted in 1917, 1919, 1922, and 1924.[1] The Federation condemned the Ku Klux Klan in 1924, adopting the exact language of an American Federation of Labor report on the Klan in place of more violent resolutions which had been introduced.[2]

The amalgamation issue, independent political action, and attempts to initiate various reforms in the American Federation of Labor will appear in a later chapter.

THE LABOR PRESS

In almost every convention, the Federation has called attention to the importance to the labor movement of a properly conducted labor press, and it has always given its encouragement to labor papers. In 1922 a committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of a daily state labor paper, but because of the industrial depression at the time nothing was done.[3] In 1927 the Federation admitted that the problem of a labor press was "not yet solved," but it was not ready to attempt a daily.[4]

Before writing his 1927 report, President Walker communicated with the editors of labor papers in Illinois and asked them to suggest how the State Federation might help them. The replies revealed that the greatest concern of

[1] See pages 231, 131, and 346, 463, 423, respectively, in the *Proceedings* of these years.

[2] Considerable ill feeling did develop in the convention, but Secretary Olander acted as peacemaker behind the scenes, counseling tolerance in fighting intolerance, and a harmony resolution introduced by him on the last day and adopted unanimously helped to lessen the tension.—*Proc* (1924), p. 327; interview, V. A. Olander.

[3] *Proc.* (1922), p. 459; (1923), pp. 55, 501 f.

[4] *Proc.* (1927), p. 119.

labor editors is how to make both ends meet; most of them urged trade unionists to patronize the advertisers in labor papers and to subscribe. One or two suggested that local correspondents for the labor press might be established in various parts of the state. The indorsement of the Federation was said to be helpful.[1]

The Illinois State Federation has given constant support to the work of the International Labor News Service, promoted by the American Federation of Labor.[2]

WORKERS' EDUCATION

The Illinois State Federation, through its Committee on Schools, expressed itself enthusiastically in favor of the movement for adult education and labor colleges in 1921, and also in favor of so-called "Americanization" work in which the instruction is free from class bias.[3] It has not, however, seen fit to establish a permanent educational director to link labor's educational efforts in Illinois with the national program, as some other state federations have done and as the Workers' Educational Bureau has urged it to do. The Executive Board did vote to affiliate the Illinois Federation with the Workers' Education Bureau, and authorized Secretary Olander to co-operate with Mr. Spencer Miller, Jr., of the Bureau, by sending out appeals in the name of the Federation for the establishment of workers' classes.[4] Again in 1926 Mr. Miller urged the Illinois Federation to appoint an educational director, but the Executive Board decided that no funds were available, since the great need was to defend the Injunction-Limitation Law in the courts.[5]

[1] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 208 f.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), p. 136.

[3] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 352 f.; also (1923), p. 459.

[4] *Proc.* (1924), p. 175; *WN*, June 28, 1924, p. 3.

[5] *WN*, March 6, 1926, p. 4.

Recently President Green has appointed Secretary Olander to serve as one of the three American Federation of Labor representatives on the executive board of the Workers' Education Bureau, and with the approval of the State Federation's Board he has accepted.[1]

THE STATE FEDERATION AND THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

A new development of this period was the encouragement given to the consumers' co-operative movement by the Federation. President Wright recommended a standing committee on co-operation in 1912, and there was a brief report to the convention of that year on "Co-operative Stores."[2] At Decatur in 1913 a committee presided over by James Lord, of Farmington, a miner, submitted a comprehensive report which reviewed the development of the Rochdale movement in England and urged similar endeavors in the United States.[3] It was printed as a pamphlet, and when circulated among the trade unionists of the state gave many of them their first acquaintance with the co-operative movement.

As a result of the educational work sponsored by the Illinois State Federation of Labor, co-operation was soon being promoted by other agencies; the Illinois Mine Workers in particular had taken it up. President Walker reported in 1915 that a number of stores had been started, and that the Federation was answering many requests for information, from both within and without the state. The officers were instructed to continue this work, and to use their best efforts to bring about a state-wide organization of co-operative societies. The hope was to establish a wholesale society.[4]

[1] *WN*, February 11, 1928, p. 3.

[2] *Proc.* (1912), pp. 24, 254.

[3] *Proc.* (1914), pp. 207–11.

[4] *Proc.* (1914), pp. 19–21, 258.

At the 1915 session of the General Assembly the State Federation, leagued with the farmers and the miners, helped to pass a new law which enabled co-operative societies to organize and incorporate.[1]

The first state co-operative society for Illinois came into existence at Springfield on March 22–25, 1915, and John H. Walker was elected president.[2] The second convention, held in 1916, boasted double the number of delegates at the first one, and shortly thereafter a subcommittee of managers of the various co-operative stores met at the office of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in Springfield and entered into a wholesale buying arrangement.[3] The Quincy convention of the Federation noted with pleasure the growth of the co-operative movement in the state, and urged its president to continue his activities, which had "made the Illinois movement the best in the United States."[4]

Shortly thereafter the Illinois State Co-operative Society expanded into the Central States Co-operative Society and adopted a plan for the creation of a wholesale department to be incorporated under the state law. The movement was enthusiastic and growing fast. The Illinois State Federation of Labor, said President Walker, "is entitled to no little credit for bringing about this magnificient result."[5] In 1918 the State Federation indorsed the Central States Co-operative Wholesale Society and authorized its Executive Board to buy $500 worth of stock with Federation funds; it also instructed its organizers to familiarize themselves with the philosophy of Rochdale co-operation in order to help educate the people.[6]

[1] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 69 f.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Proc.* (1916), p. 22.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 209.
[5] *Proc.* (1917), p. 47.
[6] *Proc.* (1918), pp. 51, 233.

For the next several years the *Weekly News Letter* and the president's reports to annual conventions devoted much attention to the progress of co-operation. The co-operative movement, its advocates pointed out, would stabilize the cost of living and prevent unjust increases; it might thus reduce the amount of fighting which the trade-union movement would be compelled to undertake in a period of rising prices. Co-operative industries would eventually be established to supply the wholesale societies, and all would operate under strictly trade-union conditions, perhaps displacing in time hordes of non-union, labor-hating employers. Even now the co-operative stores were doing away with the extortionate profits of merchants in many parts of the state. These same merchants, petty business men, and small manufacturers were in reality the source of the stiffest opposition to labor's bills in the legislature, and if they were displaced legislation would come more easily. One of the best ways to educate working people in trade-union principles was through the co-operative society; furthermore, co-operatives were ideal for the promotion of union-label goods. The co-operative movement was bringing farmers and working people closer together. These were the hopes of Illinois trade unionists as they sought to establish consumers' co-operation among the workers.[1]

During the year of Duncan McDonald's presidency, as well as in Walker's terms, the State Federation had an enthusiastic co-operator at its head. McDonald was secretary-treasurer of the Central States Co-operative Society and Walker was its president. "Concurrent with the Trades Union movement," said President McDonald in 1919, "and just as important is the great co-operative movement that is

[1] See *Proc.* (1918), 32, 43–51, 74, 206, 233; *WN*, August 21, 1915.

now sweeping the country, promising to usher in a new day in our industrial affairs."[1]

About this time there started up in Chicago a fake co-operative scheme headed by one Harrison Parker. Parker had no connection with the trade-union movement or the genuine co-operative movement, but he gave his society a name much like those used by bona fide consumers' co-operatives, distributed quotations from Rochdale literature, and printed indorsements of the co-operative movement by the Illinois State Federation of Labor and the American Federation of Labor in such a manner that unwary readers would be led to infer that this fraudulent society had the approval of the labor movement. Parker and his slick salesmen sold stock to thousands of working people, persuading them that it would rise rapidly in value and they would "get rich quick." This feature of the scheme was enough in itself to brand the whole operation as false to anyone with an elementary knowledge of consumers' co-operation.[2] The Illinois State Federation exposed the tricks of the Parker outfit repeatedly through its *News Letter* and by announcements in its conventions; it warned all real co-operators and trade unionists not to be fooled. Nevertheless, Parker found many victims, and his swindle, amounting to several million dollars, has had the effect of blocking the bona fide co-

[1] *Proc.* (1919), pp. 47 f.

[2] The essential feature of consumers' co-operation as developed by the Rochdale pioneers and practiced with great success in England and on the Continent is the principle of "dividends on purchases." That is, the difference between the income and the outgo of the co-operative society is distributed periodically among the members in proportion to the amount of purchases made by each at the store, regardless of the number of shares of stock owned. Shares of stock earn a fixed rate of interest (usually low), but never entitle the owner to dividends. Rochdale societies are always open to newcomers on the same terms, and therefore the shares can never be worth more than par.

operative movement in Illinois, and especially in Chicago, to the present day.[1]

In addition to the machinations of fake co-operative stock salesmen, the Illinois movement soon had the severe after-war depression to contend with. In 1920 President Walker's report was optimistic over the progress of the co-operative wholesale society, established in East St. Louis; one year later the wholesale society was in difficulties, and not long afterward it was practically bankrupt.[2] The Federation, along with other organizations that had aided the undertaking, surrendered its shares of stock and after reorganization received back 35 per cent of the original amount in the form of new certificates.[3] The Central States Co-operative Society abandoned its so-called "American Rochdale" chain-store plan under which the East St. Louis wholesale had been organized and returned to the unmodified Rochdale system; but the venture went under completely nevertheless.[4]

There had been high enthusiasm for co-operation in 1921 and as late as 1922; the Aurora convention even considered embarking on co-operative banking and housing.[5] But hard times struck the co-operative movement as well as private businesses, forcing retrenchments and failures. When the

[1] "Chicago trade unionists and the trade unionists of Illinois generally lost $6,500,000" through Parker's operations, said Delegate Erwin of the Brick Makers' Union in 1924. "Today in the Chicago labor movement the mention of co-operation is hissed, and it is due to no one else than Harrison Parker. For that reason co-operation in the state of Illinois has received a black eye."—*Proc.* (1924), pp. 468–69. See also *Proc.* (1920), p. 281; *WN*, July 31, 1920; *WN*, August 6, 1921.

A book by C. E. Warne, *The Consumers' Co-operative Movement in Illinois* (University of Chicago Press, 1926) contains the best account of Parker's activities and their effect upon the genuine co-operative movement.

[2] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 16 f.; (1922), p. 291.

[3] *Proc.* (1923), p. 112, "Secretary-Treasurer's Report."

[4] See Warne, *op. cit.*, for a full account.

[5] *WN*, January 28, 1922, p. 2; *WN*, February 18, 1922, p. 4.

East St. Louis wholesale foundered, the ardor of the State Federation died down. A "Co-operative Bureau" set up by authority of the 1923 convention did a small amount of publicity work and recommended adherence to pure Rochdale principles.[1] The Committee on Co-operation at Peoria in 1924 asserted that the State Federation had all along insisted on the Rochdale system, but that it had unfortunately allowed others "to advise the adoption of co-operative systems which have proven, to our loss, to be complete failures." It recommended that the president appoint a committee to carry on the work of education in pure Rochdale principles.[2]

This report was adopted, but from that time to the present consumers' co-operation has not been mentioned in conventions of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.[3]

[1] In 1922 President Walker had been appointed to take charge of the newly organized "Bureau of Co-operative Societies" of the American Federation of Labor.—*WN*, March 25, 1922.

[2] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 292–94.

[3] The conventions of 1925, 1926, and 1927 devoted considerable time to spreading information about labor life insurance companies, and in 1925 there was an address on labor banks.—*Proc.* (1925), pp. 45, 101; (1926), pp. 53 f., 145 f.; (1927), pp. 105 f.

CHAPTER XXI

THE WAR AND THE REACTION

When the first convention of this period assembled, the reverberations of the catastrophic conflict in Europe had already begun to reach the labor movement of Illinois. At first there was dismay, and a determination that the United States must not be drawn into the tragic affair. "Inasmuch as our country is at peace with all the world, while half the world is at war with itself," said the Federation in 1914, and "believing that warlike preparations and demonstrations are not compatible with the sacred interests of peace," be it resolved, "in the name of humanity, that we protest against the present agitation for a greater navy and a greater standing army with compulsory military service," and that "our representatives in the Congress . . . . be made aware of our protest . . . . against this threatened infliction of that cursed institution—militarism."[1]

A year later the bitterness and hatred bred of war had intruded itself among the delegates, and to prevent a possible division in the convention President Walker refused to permit any discussion of the political situation across the waters.[2]

Once the United States was in the war, the Illinois State Federation of Labor, like the American Federation of Labor, threw its whole-hearted support to the government. President Walker and Secretary Olander represented labor on the

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 242. Another resolution adopted by the Federation declared that the war in Europe was "an attempt of the industrial monarchs of Europe to force . . . . open markets for the surplus wealth stolen from labor."—*Ibid.*, p. 246.

[2] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 150–52.

State Council of Defense and undertook to "steady the situation" by leading the fight against those who argued that workers had no stake in the war. Governor Lowden revealed to them that United States authorities had surveyed the situation and had come to the conclusion that if Illinois, the headquarters of various organizations that might decide to interfere with war plans, could be held steady there would be no danger for the nation. The convention of the State Federation likewise rallied to the flag, and delegates went back to their local unions with the message "stand by the government." When the war was over, the State Council of Defense reported with pride "that there had not been a strike of any consequence throughout the history of the war in the State of Illinois."[1]

President Walker was one of the group of trade unionists and socialists who called the conference of the "American Alliance for Labor and Democracy" held at Minneapolis in September, 1917. The alliance urged unity of action and loyalty to the government during the war being fought for the cause of "democracy, now assailed by autocracy and militarism." He also took part in various other conferences for the same purpose. There was some criticism of these activities at the next convention of the State Federation, Delegate E. A. Wieck being very insistent in wanting to know all about who paid the expenses for the Minneapolis meeting, but he was finally silenced, and the convention indorsed the actions of its president.[2]

The war psychology was in full sway at this 1917 convention. Delegate Castle, of Frankfort, was the only member who had the hardihood or the courage to express publicly the doubts of some socialists about the noble objects being

[1] Remarks in the course of a speech in the 1924 convention by Secretary Olander, *Proc.* (1924), pp. 313–14.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), p. 274.

served by the armed forces of the United States. While he would do nothing to hinder the prosecution of the war, said he, "millions of the people think as I do that America is not in this war for democracy and that the world is not at war for democracy but as an exploitation of the working class." This was far from the official view, however. As President Walker, himself an ex-socialist, stated the issue, "the war is being waged for the interests of our nation and the human race," and "this earth will be better for the working men and women after the Kaiser is put down, the Kaiser and his autocracy."[1]

At the request of Governor Lowden, President Walker and Secretary Olander recommended active trade unionists throughout the state for appointment to district exemption boards, and they accepted appointments themselves in their own districts.[2] Walker became a member of President Wilson's Mediation Commission and helped to adjust strikes and lockouts in the western states and to investigate the

[1] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 271, 274. The convention did a fine thing, however, when it adopted a resolution presented by a group of delegates headed by Edward Nockels, of the Chicago Federation of Labor. The resolution alluded to press reports of condemnation and even threats of impeachment hurled against that friend of labor, Senator Robert M. La Follette, of Wisconsin, on account of his minority stand against the war. It spoke a message of "calmness and tolerance to all citizens of our land during this great crisis." The resolution declared that "while we disagree with his view on the war situation we ask for Robert M. La Follette the greatest right of all democracy, a right to be heard, a right to express the views of an intelligent minority, for on this rock is founded all liberty." It conveyed to Senator La Follette "our confidence in his integrity and loyalty as a true American citizen, even though he differ with the great body of labor and our people on some questions of the war." President Walker commented that the resolution upheld the right of free speech, but that "there is a difference between the right to free speech in America, and giving a license to men to preach treason and stab our government to the heart."—*Proc.* (1917), p. 292.

[2] "We felt that it was not only the duty of labor to serve on these boards, but that in order that there might not be unfair discrimination . . . . we felt that it was a necessity. . . . ."—"President's Report," *Proc.* (1917), p.57.

Mooney case. Olander was made a member of the Federal War Labor Board, which determined the labor policies of the government during the war. Both turned over to the Federation the pay which they received from the United States and drew their regular salaries.[1]

The recognition accorded to organized labor during the war enabled it to make unheard-of progress. President Walker reported to the 1917 convention that "there has been possibly greater activity in the Labor Movement during the past year than in all the history of our state." He mentioned a long list of successful strikes and organizing campaigns, "in nearly all of which the Illinois State Federation of Labor has helped." With the assistance of the governor and the State Council of Defense labor had been able to have the Workmen's Compensation Law made compulsory, and the State Council of Defense had been the deciding influence in settling a strike of the street-railway and power-house workmen in Bloomington, carrying with it recognition of the union and an increase in wages. Secretary Olander, working with the Chicago Federation of Labor, and President Walker, as a member of the Mediation Commission, helped to bring about the stock-yards agreement in December, 1917.[2]

There were some attempts in the legislature to use the war as an excuse to shelve labor's bills. A statement sent out by the National Council of Defense was construed into the story that this body, the secretary of war, and even Mr. Gompers, who was chairman of its Committee on Labor, were opposed to the passage of such measures as the women's eight-hour bill and the injunction limitation bill. It was only after frantic telegraphing between Springfield and Washing-

[1] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 316–19; (1918), pp. 76, 82, 214.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 51–56; *WN*, December 29, 1917.

ton that the State Federation of Labor was able to obtain official denials and remove the false impression.[1]

Under the guise of a war measure, Senator Dunlap proposed that every male between the ages of sixteen and sixty be compelled to work at least thirty-six hours every week at some recognized gainful occupation or profession. The Joint Labor Legislative Board denounced this vehemently as the "Dunlap Slave Bill," and pointed out that with such a law an employer might set wages and hours to suit his fancy and the laborers would not dare to strike.[2] The bill did not pass.

AFTER THE WAR: A. LABOR ON THE OFFENSIVE

For more than a year after the signing of the armistice the war-time boom continued, and labor in this period of "prosperity" launched an enthusiastic advance movement. On the industrial field the greatest undertaking was the drive to organize the steel-workers, culminating in the great steel strike of 1919.

The field marshals in this struggle were John Fitzpatrick and William Z. Foster, both of Chicago, and the Illinois State Federation of Labor took a keen interest. The Peoria convention of October 20–25, 1919, was a steel-strike session; it assembled at the height of the battle, and that titanic effort to abolish the twelve-hour day and to wrest the unorganized, unskilled, foreign laborers of the steel towns from the oppression of a great industry held the center of the stage. News from the mills or plans to aid the strikers had right of way over all other business. On the fifth day John Fitzpatrick entered the hall and was escorted to the platform amid a tremendous ovation; the delegates listened with wrapt attention while he described the latest developments in Gary and Pittsburgh.

[1] See telegram in *WN*, May 5, 1917.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 86–87.

Fitzpatrick pictured the emergency that confronted organized labor—over 300,000 newly organized workers out, without the machinery of established national unions, and without strike funds behind them. In its enthusiasm for the cause, the Federation telegraphed the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor urging that a special convention be called immediately to levy an assessment upon every member of organized labor of "not less than one-fourth of his net earnings and upon every officer of organized labor not less than 50 per cent of his salary"; it instructed its officers to issue an immediate appeal for funds; and it took up a collection among the delegates. The Federation forwarded to the Strike Committee about $3,500 in the next few weeks.[1]

An important phase of the steel struggle was the effort of steel-corporation agents, aided by newspapers, to inject a "Red" element into the situation and thereby turn the attention of the public from the real issues at stake. Just prior to the State Federation convention Colonel Mapes, in command of United States troops at Gary, was widely quoted to the effect that military men had discovered evidence proving that the strike in that district was manipulated by "Reds," and that if loyal workmen knew the facts the strike would fall flat. The Chicago Federation of Labor received no response in its efforts to communicate with Colonel Mapes on this subject and Secretary Olander, of the State Federation, immediately took the matter up. When the convention opened, a telegram was sent to Colonel Mapes demanding an explanation. The Colonel replied that he had been misquoted; whereupon the Federation telegraphed Victor A. Lawson, of the *Chicago Daily News*, to ask retraction of the interview and removal of the correspondent who sent it. The managing editor replied for Mr. Lawson that he had gone into the matter carefully and found six

[1] *Proc.* (1919), pp. 160–73, 191–203, 238, 275 f.; *Proc.* (1920), p. 33.

newspaper men from different papers all of whom testified that Colonel Mapes had made the statement attributed to him. Then the situation was laid by telegraph before Newton D. Baker, secretary of war, who wired in reply that he had communicated with Mapes, and that the Colonel still maintained he had been misquoted, though he had given information regarding "Red" activities to the press. The secretary of war stated that his representatives informed him there had been much misrepresentation in the press regarding conditions at Gary and statements of military authorities, and he promised to keep in touch with conditions.[1] This incident illustrates in a concrete way one of the important functions discharged by a State Federation of Labor in emergencies of the kind.

Not only by industrial organization and the strike did organized labor conduct its post-war offensive. It demanded a political "reconstruction" that should go deep into the fundamental relations of society and give the laboring man his due. The convention of 1918 voiced this demand and determined to join with the Chicago Federation of Labor in launching a labor party. The labor party movement of 1918 and 1919 did not come as a product of despair; it did not arise in a period of depression, and labor did not feel, as it had in earlier ventures into independent political action, that "the strike and the boycott have failed." Rather, it was a forward movement, a part of the offensive that produced the steel strike. Organized labor had felt its power during the war; its leaders had been high in the councils of the government. And had not the war been fought for an ideal? Was it not time for workers to take hold, and out of the upheaval of traditions and institutions to construct a new society worthy of the sacrifices made in the name of democracy?

[1] *Proc.* (1919), pp. 173, 201, 229, 243–47, 356.

Beginning thus in a period of high hope, the labor party movement merged into the period of reaction and defense. Its story will be told in the next chapter.

AFTER THE WAR: B. LABOR ON THE DEFENSIVE

The *News Letter* in 1918 quoted under the caption "Our Chance" a remark of William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor: "The group which does the most toward winning the war will have the greatest influence after the war."[1] Trade unionists thought that their demonstration of utmost loyalty to the government throughout the national war crisis would settle once and for all the question of the worthiness of the organized labor movement in the public mind. They were disappointed.

There is a saying to the effect that all things that go up come down, and the war era of heavy production, high prices, and hollow prosperity had to come to an end. It hung on until sometime in 1920, then collapsed like a pricked balloon; the inevitable reaction from war-time economic dissipation was at hand. Business took a slump, a great wave of unemployment rolled over the land, and labor, suddenly blocked in its post-war offensive, found itself attacked on every side. The powerful "open-shop" drive was on, and the trade unions fought for their very existence.

President Walker reported in 1921 that "the enemies of labor [have] been employing a greater variety of means and methods and exerting greater strength and influence to destroy the labor movement . . . . than at any time that I have been connected with it." The Federation considered ways and means of combating the open-shop propaganda, recommended that central bodies in each city and town call conferences for the same purpose, proclaimed the right

[1] *WN*, July 20, 1918.

of labor to bargain collectively, and called upon affiliated unions to gather data to meet the charges being broadcast against union labor.[1]

The Manufacturers' Association of Illinois early assumed a position of national leadership in the open-shop drive. It succeeded in organizing the first national open-shop meeting —the American Idea Convention—held in Chicago on January 21, 1921.[2] Under its encouragement, thousands of Illinois manufacturers and business men were marshaled. According to a press notice on January 23, 1921, "during the last month, one hundred cities have joined the movement and virtually every city in the state with a manufacturers' organization has signed pledges promising its aid to make the fight for the open shop."[3]

The Illinois State Federation of Labor bent its energies to the task of resisting this attack. It collected relief donations for organizations on strike or locked out, sent its Executive Board members to assist central bodies and local unions where the battle was hardest, and counteracted as best it could the extensive publicity campaign inaugurated by the manufacturers. "The year that has passed since the adjournment of our last convention has been perhaps the most strenuous in the existence of the labor movement in the state of Illinois," wrote President Walker in 1922.[4]

The open-shop drive had its counterpart in the legislature; organized labor found itself on the defensive in its political as well as its industrial activities. In 1919 the old Anti-Boycott Association, which had won such famous court decisions against trade unions as the Danbury Hatters and

[1] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 54–55, 94, 359, 362.

[2] Savel Zimand, *The Open Shop Drive*, p. 19.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Proc.* (1922), p. 50.

the Buck Stove and Range cases, changed its name to "The League for Industrial Rights," inaugurated its publication *Law and Labor*, and embarked on a legislative program.[1] Illinois was one of the states in which its attack was launched, and in the depression year of 1921 the Illinois State Federation of Labor found itself confronted with a bountiful crop of hostile bills in the General Assembly.

The suability bill was one of a trio introduced by Senator Turnbaugh and backed by the League:

> SECTION 1. Be it enacted. . . . That any unincorporated or voluntary association of seven or more members may sue and be sued in the name of the association.
>
> SECTION 2. Service of process upon any officer, manager or business agent of such association shall constitute service upon the association.[2]

Secretary Olander wrote in the *News Letter*:

> The purpose, it would seem, is to compel all forms of voluntary associations to seek incorporation in order to secure a limitation of liability. The effect, of course, would be to destroy voluntary associations as they now exist and to create a condition under which all forms of associated effort through incorporation would be subject to direct supervision and regulation by the state.

Recent court decisions, he remarked, had already gone so far in extending the liability of trade unions that it was difficult to say just what effect such a measure would have upon organized labor.[3]

The Joint Labor Legislative Board in opposing this bill argued that its terms were inclusive and would apply not only to labor organizations but also to "a group of citizens joining temporarily to promote a public ownership question during an election, a Ladies' Aid Society of some church meeting for some charitable object, a group of young people

[1] Walter Gordon Merritt, *The History of the League for Industrial Rights*, a pamphlet published by the League.

[2] Senate Bill No. 182, reprinted in *WN*, March 26, 1929, p. 4.

[3] *WN*, April 2, 1921.

organized to promote a dance or a pleasure jaunt"; in each instance every individual would be made liable ultimately for any and every act of the association. Furthermore, it argued, the bill would open huge opportunities for unscrupulous employers who employed industrial spies: "Secret manipulations within a Trade Union could . . . . easily create a condition under which every member of the Union would become liable for damages."[1]

A companion of the suability bill was S.B.183, entitled, "An Act for the better protection of Public Welfare against Unwarranted Strikes and Lockouts," and referred to by organized labor as the "antistrike bill." This bill would have made it unlawful for anyone willingly to "cause, further or make effective" any "unwarranted industrial warfare" or to attempt to do so by taking a strike vote, paying strike benefits, stationing pickets, distributing handbills, or doing any of a number of things enumerated in the bill. A strike or lockout was to be deemed "unwarranted industrial warfare" under any of the following conditions:

a) when involving public employees, federal, state, county, or municipal;

b) when "in violation of any agreement, or for conditions of employment conflicting with an agreement between an employer and his employees, or any employer and any labor union";

c) when in violation of any arbitration award or for conditions of employment conflicting with the terms of an award;

d) when designed to enforce terms of employment which the party from whom the terms are sought has not had a "reasonable time" to consider;

e) or "where there is no trade dispute involving issues of direct benefit to the acting parties."

The state, or any political subdivision, or any person, firm, or corporation threatened with injury by anything forbidden in the act would be entitled to "appropriate civil

[1] "Joint Board Report," *Proc.* (1921), pp. 169–70.

remedies in law and equity," including the injunction process.[1]

It is evident from the definition of "unwarranted industrial warfare" contained in this bill that a strike in violation of *individual* contracts between an employer and his employees, as well as a strike in any way conflicting with the terms of a collective agreement, as interpreted by an "injunction judge," would be unlawful. It would also be the judge's place to determine in any case whether or not an employer had been allowed a "reasonable" time to consider demands before a strike. Under the clause designed to prohibit sympathetic strikes even the members of the same local union engaged in the same shop could not join together for strike purposes unless every individual among them were to benefit directly by the demands. Furthermore, under the sweeping prohibitions of the bill, donations or contributions of any kind, such as money, clothing, and food, given to striking workmen by any person or organization might render the person or the organization liable to suit for damages.

The representatives of organized labor, through the State Federation and the Joint Labor Legislative Board, pointed out all this. The bill was plainly drafted, they declared,

> with the deliberate purpose of establishing group slavery in free America by denying to the working people of Illinois the very elementary and necessary right to quit work. It proposes to re-establish the principle of compulsory labor. . . . . It was designed to tie the individual worker to his job through the group.

It would accomplish this purpose "by rendering the individual subject to arbitrary punishment without the usual forms of trial and without trial by jury at the whim and caprice of any injunction judge selected by the employer and

[1] Text of bill is reprinted in *WN*, March 26, 1921.

by subjecting him to the possible loss of his home and savings through damage suits."[1]

The third of the League for Industrial Rights trio was an antipicketing measure which forbade anyone, under penalty of from $25 to $500 fine or ninety days imprisonment or both, to

> watch, beset or picket the premises of another where any person is employed, or any approach thereto where any employee lodges or resides, for the purpose of threatening, intimidating, compelling, coercing or inducing, by reason of fear, any person employed to quit employment, or any person from freely seeking to enter, or freely entering into employment.

Assembling in the vicinity of industrial plants, derogatory language or gestures, or threats, for the purpose of "inducing by fear" any person to leave or refrain from employment, or for the purpose of carrying out a boycott, were also to be prohibited.[2]

Of course, labor also opposed this bill vigorously, maintaining that it would be used to deny freedom of speech and of assemblage. With the aid of the "industrial spy system," it would even allow employers to prevent anyone from saying unpleasant or unkind things about his business or his employees, even truthful things, if what was said might be construed by the courts as likely to inspire fear. The courts might prevent meetings for organizing purposes, basing their injunctions on this statute, were it enacted.[3]

These three bills, said the Joint Board, ought to convince the most skeptical of the extent to which this "labor-baiting, autocratic, un-American, reactionary clique of employers" will go in "undermining and destroying the fundamental principles of this government, in order that they might carry

[1] "Joint Board Report," *Proc.* (1921), pp. 170–72; *WN*, April 2, 1921.

[2] Text of bill in *WN*, March 26, 1921.

[3] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1921), p. 173–74.

out their scheme to deprive the workers of their right to have an organization."

The suability bill was the one really pushed in Illinois.[1] It was reported out favorably by the Senate Committee on Judicial Department and Practice in 1921, without any opportunity for labor to state its views, but after being advanced to third reading it "died on the calendar" and did not reach a final roll call. S.B. 183, the "antistrike bill," expired in committee without being reported to the Senate. The bill to prohibit picketing died in the Judiciary Committee.[2]

There were other legislative proposals in 1921 against which labor had to wage a defensive battle. The constabulary or military police bill came near going through. William G. Thon, a representative from Chicago, sponsored a bill to permit courts to review the records of any voluntary association to determine whether or not the laws of the organization had been properly carried out in the fining or expulsion of any member. The bill "was dangerous mainly because it proposed to give additional statutory authorization to the courts for the purpose of interfering with voluntary associations."[3] The passage of a state antitrust law, modeled somewhat on the Sherman Act under which labor had suffered so much, was barely averted.[4]

Meanwhile a state constitutional convention had done its work at the height of the after-war reaction, and in 1922 the State Federation of Labor had to wage the greatest defensive battle in its history against the document offered the voters by that convention.[5] In 1923 the League for Industrial

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 170, 172, 174.

[3] *Proc.* (1921), p. 176.

[4] The constabulary bill and the antitrust measure will be mentioned again later.

[5] See chap. xxv.

Rights bills were back in the General Assembly again, with the exception of that on picketing. The suability measure was tabled on second reading in the Senate and a duplicate died in a House committee. The antistrike bill died in committee in both houses.[1] There were also present in the 1923 session several bills constructed out of the remains of the proposed state constitution, rejected at the polls the year before. Most of them were designed to alter the rules or extend the power of the judiciary, and labor opposed them. None was enacted.[2]

The labor movement of Illinois, led by the State Federation, survived the period of post-war reaction without sustaining any serious reversals in its legislative campaign. The forward movement was checked by the onslaughts of the opposition, but organized labor lost no legislative ground in its defensive engagements. In many industrial states this was not true, and the Illinois State Federation of Labor justly prides itself on the accomplishment.

[1] *Proc.* (1923), pp. 197–99.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 201.

CHAPTER XXII

INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION—A LABOR PARTY

The reconstruction program of the British Labour party with its inspiring vision of a new social order had much to do with the rise of Labor party enthusiasm in this country at the close of the war. It was printed in full in the *Weekly News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, reached thousands of workers through the *Miners' Journal* and similar publications, and was widely circulated among labor sympathizers by the *New Republic* and the liberal press.

Combined with the reconstruction spirit and the idealism inspired by President Wilson's war-time speeches on democracy was the fact that labor, in Illinois at least, had not been markedly successful in its legislative efforts for some years and had gained little at the hands of the old parties. The Illinois General Assembly had strangled labor's important bills, and particularly the injunction limitation measure. The courts, too, were tightening the grip of the common law and circumscribing the economic activities of trade unions.

All these things doubtless influenced Chicago and Illinois trade-union leaders when in the fall of 1918 they decided that the time had come for labor to form its own political party. Furthermore, labor's power during the war and the high place accorded its representatives in the war-time councils of the government had given confidence and determination to many of its leaders that this larger influence might be continued in peace-time.

Once the Labor party movement had been launched, new grievances continued to argue for its spread. The govern-

ment intervened under the war-time Lever Act to forbid a coal strike, though the war was over. Attorney-General Palmer added his activities to those of another member of the Federal cabinet, Postmaster-General Burleson, who had shown hostility to organized labor. "The Guns of Gary" echoed through the Labor party press.[1] And through it all, as a caption in the *News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation had it, the workers of America were still "waiting for that 'World Democracy' that they helped fight for."[2]

These were some of the things that helped to bring about a Labor party movement in the years following 1918. The movement failed, as we shall see, partly on account of the hostility of American Federation of Labor leaders, partly on account of disharmonies within and the activities of a militant minority of Communists, partly on account of machinations of the old parties, ballot frauds, a hostile press, and similar tribulations of third-party movements, partly on account of inherent difficulties which our political system places in the way of minority parties, and partly because it ran afoul of the tremendous after-war reaction with its frantic longing for "normalcy."

The Chicago Federation of Labor took the first step in the Labor party movement when, on October 6, 1918, it voted to request the president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor to "call a convention in the immediate future for the purpose of considering the advisability of forming in Illinois an independent labor party along lines of the British Labor Party but adapted to American conditions."[3] At its first meeting after the Armistice, November 17, 1918, the Chicago Federation indorsed unanimously amid great en-

[1] See *WN*, and *New Majority* for 1919–20.

[2] *WN*, June 28, 1919.

[3] T. C. Bigham, *The Chicago Federation of Labor*, M. A. thesis, University of Chicago (1924), p. 131.

thusiasm a manifesto known as "Labor's Fourteen Points" and adopted a plan for an independent Labor party. "Labor's Fourteen Points" had been drawn up down in Washington by Frank Walsh, Basil Manly, John Fitzpatrick, and Edward Nockels; they were brought to Chicago by Fitzpatrick and Nockels. This document was intended to lay down the basic principles of social reconstruction in this country as the British Labour party's reconstruction program had done for Britain; it was to state the objectives of the labor political movement as President Wilson's "Fourteen Points" had phrased the war aims of the government.[1]

Two weeks later, the annual convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor added its indorsement to "Labor's Fourteen Points" and agreed to join with the Chicago Federation to form a state Labor party, should a referendum vote indicate that the rank and file were favorable. A few conservatives in the convention spoke against such a course, but most of them either decided to have a try at the Labor party experiment or said nothing.[2]

After the convention the question of forming an independent Labor party was sent to the affiliated (and unaffiliated) unions in Illinois by Assistant-Secretary Towers, who was in charge of the secretary's office during Secretary

[1] *Ibid.* Also, H. B. Sell, *The American Federation of Labor and the Labor Party Movement of 1918–1920*, M. A. thesis, University of Chicago (1922), p. 68.

"Labor's Fourteen Points" demanded: the right to organize; democratic control of industry; the eight-hour day and minimum wage; abolition of unemployment; equal rights for men and women; stop profiteering; abolish Kaiserism in education; extension of soldiers' and sailors' insurance to all workers; tax inheritance, incomes, and land values to pay war debt and government expenses; public ownership of public utilities, and nationalization of natural resources; restoration of free speech, free press, and free assemblage; labor representation in all departments of government; labor representation in peace conference; an end to kings and wars.

[2] *Proc.* (1918), pp. 133–54.

Olander's absence.[1] The result, announced in March, 1919, was overwhelmingly in favor of a Labor party among those voting; the actual count showed 10 to 1 for the Labor party out of 25,000 ballots cast,[2] of which 17,000 represented members of affiliated organizations and the rest unaffiliated. Accordingly, the State Federation of Labor issued a call for a state convention to meet in Springfield on April 10, 1919.[3]

Meanwhile, spring elections occurred in municipalities throughout the state, and in some places local Labor parties made good showing. In Bloomington, John B. Lennon was the mayoralty candidate on the Labor ticket, and in a total of 10,000 votes cast this veteran treasurer of the American Federation of Labor came within 287 of being elected. Many cities and towns in the coal-mining districts of central and southern Illinois elected one or more Labor candidates.[4] In Chicago the results were disappointing. The city campaign had been enthusiastic, with John Fitzpatrick, the popular president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, running for mayor. Labor candidates stood for the offices of city treasurer, city clerk, municipal court judge, and superior court judge; many wards had Labor aldermanic candidates. Large mass-meetings were addressed by Frank Walsh and Lynn J. Frazier, Non-Partisan League governor of North Dakota. Fitzpatrick addressed a meeting of five thousand Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and their president, Sidney Hillman, aroused great enthusiasm when he spoke in support of the Labor ticket. He favored Mr. Fitzpatrick

[1] Secretary Olander suffered a breakdown from overwork shortly before the Bloomington convention met, and soon afterward found it necessary to obtain leave of absence. He resumed active work in September, 1919.

[2] A referendum election of officers about this same time polled 78,000 members from affiliated organizations alone.—*WN*, March 1, 1919.

[3] *WN*, March 15, 1919.

[4] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 86; *WN*, April 19, 1919.

for mayor, he said, in order that Chicago might have a chief of police who would not beat the heads off strikers to help the bosses win. But Fitzpatrick polled only fifty-six thousand votes, about 8 per cent of the total cast. The Republican candidate was successful with 38 per cent, the Democratic received 34 per cent, an independent nominee 16 per cent, and the Socialists 3 per cent.[1] Nevertheless, the Chicago Federation accepted the result as progress and determined to go forward.

The state convention assembled on April 10 to organize the Labor party of Illinois. There were 611 delegates present, representing 93 cities and towns from all sections of the state, 30 central bodies, 56 crafts, 6 federal labor unions, 12 district councils and conference boards, and the Women's Trade Union League.[2] Duncan McDonald, newly elected president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor and a lifelong Labor party advocate, presided. The convention listened to an address by S. S. McDonald, president of the North Dakota State Federation of Labor, who recounted the successes of the Non-Partisan League; heard Glenn E. Plumb outline his plan for the reorganization of the railroads; listened to Dr. N. S. Harkider, of India, on the subject of "Freedom from English Rule in India and Ireland"; took up pledges to meet the expenses of the Labor party; and then got down to business.

A constitution was adopted which set up a state organization based on county Labor parties, with a state chairman, an executive committee of fifteen, three auditors, and a secretary to be selected by the Executive Committee. Dues were to be collected by a stamp system; the stamps entitling to membership in the Labor party for a period of three months

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[2] *WN*, April 19, 1919.

would be sold by the state organization to the county organization for 5 cents each, by the county organization to affiliated local unions for 30 cents each, and by the local to the individual member for 50 cents each. Until such time as county organizations were established everywhere, the Labor party of Illinois might accept membership directly on the basis of 12 cents a year per capita for local unions and $2.00 a year for individual members. Duncan McDonald became state chairman.[1]

The preamble to its platform declared that the Labor party

"is the party of the workers with hand and brain. Organized workers are members of it. Unorganized workers are members of it. Clerks, housewives, newspaper men, farmers, school teachers, store keepers, belong to it. Such heads of organizations and business concerns as are not exploiters or profiteers belong to it. There is no place in the party for those who are not workers. There is room within it for all who perform service to society."

It was organized "to assemble, into a new majority, the men and women who work, but who have been scattered as helpless minorities in the old parties under the leadership of the confidence men of big business." The platform consisted of twenty-four planks, many of them embodying issues raised in "Labor's Fourteen Points."[2]

[1] The Executive Committee of the Labor Party of Illinois consisted of: M. R. Cunningham, Centralia Trades and Labor Assembly; Alice M. Randolph, Cook County Labor party; H. C. Maddox, Alton Trades and Labor Assembly; John P. McGrath, Springfield Federation of Labor; Daniel Reese, Miners, Toluca; Elizabeth Maloney, Waitresses' Union, Chicago; Madge Argo, Waitress, Joilet; Theodore J. Vind, South Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly; L. J. Salch, Bloomington Trades and Labor Assembly; Allen S. Haywood, Miners' Union, Taylorville; Frank Hefferly, Miners' Union, Collinsville; William Tracy, Brick Makers' Council No. 1, Lansing; W. E. Rodriguez, Painters' Union, Chicago; Thomas R. Downey, Galesburg Central Labor Union; Gertrude M. Fitzgerald, Cook County Labor party.—*WN*, April 19, 1919.

[2] Platform of the Labor Party of Illinois, adopted at Springfield, April, 1919 (*WN*, April 26, 1919):

"1. Democratic control of industry and commerce for the general good of those who work with hand and brain. . . . .

"2. The unqualified right of workers to organize and to deal collectively with employers through such representatives of their organizations as they choose.

"3. The freedom from economic hazard which comes with a minimum wage based upon the cost of living and the right of the worker to maintain (himself and his family) without the labor of mothers and children. . . . .

"4. Leisure in which to enjoy happiness and improve the mind and body by the institution of a maximum working day of eight hours, and a minimum working week of forty-four hours, both for men and women.

"5. Abolition of unemployment by reducing the hours of work still further, as necessary, to permit all who are able to work to find occupation; and full pay for those who, for a time, are unemployed because of illness, accident or temporary lack of work.

"6. Equality of men and women in government and industry, with complete enfranchisement of women and equal pay for men and women doing similar work.

"7. Reduction of the cost of living, immediately and as a permanent policy, by the development of co-operation, and the elimination of wasteful methods, middlemen and all profiteering. . . . .

"8. Complete revision of the State Constitution so that instead of its being, as at present, the fortress of reactionaries and the backbone of the big business organization that grips the State, it will become the bulwark of the workers, built upon the theory of guaranteeing human rights instead of exalting property rights. . . . .

"9. Taxation of inheritance and incomes at a graduated rate progressing with their size, and taxation of land values, but not of improvements.

"10. Public ownership and operation of all public utilities, including grain elevators, warehouses, stockyards, abattoirs, insurance and banks. Development under public ownership, preferably Federal, of the mines of Illinois, and in the meantime State regulation which will prevent wasteful competitive methods of mining.

"11. State aid to provide land and homes for Illinois residents in town or country.

"12. Abolition of employment of all children under the age of 16 years.

"13. A democratic system of public education from kindergarten to university, with free text books, and with opportunity for full cultural and vocational education for every child. Re-education of disabled soldiers, and the application of same restorative treatment to disabled industrial workers.

"14. Old age and health insurance, an adequate workmen's compensation law and a mothers' pension that will put an end to child poverty and permit the full development of every child under its mother's care.

"15. Use by the state of only such supplies and materials as bear the Union label, including school text books.

"16. Full political rights for civil service employes.

The New Majority, a weekly paper recently established by the Chicago Federation of Labor to promote the Labor party movement, was made the official organ of the Labor party of Illinois. A committee was appointed to study the co-operative movement and work it into the Labor party's activities in the state.

Frank J. Esper, of Springfield, employed by the Executive Committee as state secretary of the Labor party, and Edwin F. Bowen, state organizer, worked throughout the summer establishing county branches and interesting local unions in the movement. They reported encouraging results in the field.[1] At the request of party officials, the secretary-treasurer's office of the Illinois State Federation of Labor handled the finances of the new organization; receipts from per capita tax and donations amounted to $5,300 up to October 1, 1919.[2]

"17. Abolition of private employment, detective and strike-breaking agencies and the extension of Federal and State employment services. . . . .

"18. Abolition of the State Senate.

"19. Abolition of the power of judges to issue and enforce injunctions to deprive citizens of their rights in industrial disputes and enactment into law of the right of citizens to trial by jury for contempt of court committed elsewhere than in the presence of the court.

"20. No law to be declared by the Supreme Court unconstitutional unless three-fourths of the judges so decide.

"21. All state work to be done, not by contract, but directly by the state.

"22. The development of co-operative trade and industry and enactment of needed legislation favorable to that purpose.

"23. Immediate repeal of the infamous espionage law and complete restoration, at the earliest possible moment, of all fundamental political rights—free speech, free press and free assemblage. . . . .

"24. That the Federal government assume responsibility for a reconstruction program of land improvement, home building and production of useful commodities, which will provide useful and well paid employment for the unemployed workers of the country and that the state of Illinois and the municipal governments in the state co-operate in such a program."

[1] *WN*, May–October, 1919, *passim*.

[2] *Proc.* (1919), p. 55.

The Labor party decided to devote particular attention to securing representation in the constitutional convention, to which delegates were to be elected in November. It secured the services of Herbert S. Bigelow, chairman of Ohio's last constitutional convention, to tour the state in support of this portion of its program.[1] Workers were advised to stay away from the polls on primary day, since Labor candidates had to go on by petition.[2]

In spite of the Labor party's campaign for representation in the constitutional convention, not a single one of its candidates was elected. The party did carry Saline County in the Fifty-first District, Will County in the Forty-first, and St. Clair County in the Forty-ninth; but nowhere could it control a whole district. In some localities the Labor nominees were ruled off the ballot by the election commissioners and their names had to be written in; in Cook County there was a blunder which put the judicial candidates on the ballot under the caption "Labor party," while those running for convention delegates appeared under "Labor Party of Cook County." No doubt this produced some confusion, and many Labor ballots were probably spoiled through careless marking. The judicial candidates put up by the party in Cook County received considerably fewer votes than had John Fitzpatrick the previous spring; they even ran behind the Socialist ticket.[3]

The June, 1919, convention of the American Federation of Labor, while recognizing the right of affiliated unions and central bodies to take action as they wished, reaffirmed its adherence to the traditional non-partisan political policy and

[1] *WN*, June 14, July 12, August 16, 1919. The Labor party program for revision of the constitution will be taken up in chap. xxv.

[2] *Proc.* (1919), p. 46.

[3] Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 92–93.

advised that course to members.[1] Spurred on by the unsympathetic attitude of the American Federation of Labor and by a desire to consolidate the movement springing up in various sections of the country, the Executive Committees of the Cook County Labor party and the Labor party of Illinois held a joint meeting in Chicago only a week after the American Federation convention and decided to call a conference to consider the advisability of inaugurating a national Labor party. When the conference met in Chicago on August 18, there were thirty delegates present from the seven states of Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, and South Dakota; credentials had been issued to persons in California and Pennsylvania, but they failed to appear. The conference issued a call for a national convention, which convened in Chicago on November 22, 1919.[2]

More than twelve hundred delegates from thirty-seven states and the District of Columbia assembled to form the Labor party of the United States.[3] Max Hayes, Typographical Union of Cleveland, was made permanent chairman, and John H. Walker became vice-chairman. Frank Esper, secretary of the Illinois Labor party, was the unanimous choice for permanent secretary. The platform adopted by the national party was much like that framed in Illinois, except that it covered an even broader range of subjects in an attempt to garner in as many dissatisfied groups as possible.[4]

The Labor party movement had now been going on for one year, and though there had been no significant successes it appeared to be making progress. Opposition so far had

[1] *Proc.*, American Federation of Labor (1919), p. 374.

[2] Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–101; *WN*, November 22, 1919.

[3] *WN*, December 6, 1919.

[4] Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–8.

been local and sporadic. Now, however, Samuel Gompers and conservative leaders of the American Federation of Labor who had always advised against a Labor party began to take steps to counteract its influence.[1] On December 13 there was a conference to organize the supporters of the non-partisan policy on a nation-wide scale; eighty-nine of the national and international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and the four unaffiliated railway brotherhoods were represented. This conference adopted a statement called "Labor's Protests, Grievances and Demands," and President Gompers appointed a national Non-Partisan Campaign Committee composed of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor and the heads of its departments. The committee planned the most extensive political campaign in the history of the American Federation of Labor to "defeat the legislative enemies of the workers and to elect our friends." The national committee requested central bodies and local unions to appoint non-partisan committees on political action; central bodies were asked to co-operate in providing information about candidates; the aid of three hundred editors of labor papers was sought; large quantities of leaflets dealing with the issues of the campaign and extolling the achievements of the American Federation of Labor through non-partisan political action went out. "There is reason to believe that the

[1] A reconstruction program drawn up by the American Federation of Labor administration in the fall of 1918 and indorsed in the convention of 1919 bore such a striking resemblance to "Labor's Fourteen Points" that some have held it was adapted from the latter program and issued to counteract Labor party sentiment. This need not be true, however, for the aims of the Labor party advocates and the American Federation of Labor leaders were much the same; they differed mainly on the method by which the desired results might be achieved.—See American Federation of Labor, "Reconstruction Program," in *American Federationist* (1919), p. 133; summarized by Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

American Federation of Labor campaign did much to take the wind out of the sails of the labor party movement."[1]

Gompers used his personal influence to draw away influential local labor men from the Labor party. He urged loyalty to the trade-union movement, pointed to the past failure of Labor parties, and argued that the net effect had been to divide the labor vote and elect the enemies of the workers.[2] In some correspondence which he had with the Chicago Federation of Labor he admitted that for the time being he would probably be unable to win the Chicago Federation back to the tried and proved political policy of the American Federation of Labor, but, he continued, "it is to be hoped that we shall live at least until after the close of the coming campaign when we, too, may be in a position to compare notes as to who will have the excuses and the regrets

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 112. The *Weekly News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation of Labor printed the circular sent out by Gompers and the Non-Partisan Campaign Committee with the comment that certain newspapers were wrong in attempting to create the impression that the Gompers statement was unfriendly to the Labor party. "In line with the political policy of the American Federation of Labor, which calls for voluntary action on the part of trade unions, organized labor will participate in the political struggle in such manner as the members in each locality deem best calculated to secure the desired results. In Illinois the organized labor movement has declared itself . . . . [for] the Labor Party." The trade unionists of Illinois will not be misled, the article concluded, by antilabor forces that attempt to misconstrue the position of the American Federation of Labor and the Labor party; instead, they "will remain steadfast in their adherence to both the A. F. of L. and the Labor party."—*WN*, February 21, 1920.

[2] See, for example, the Gompers-Mitch correspondence, summarized in Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 113–15. This exchange of letters arose when a convention of Indiana trade unionists in February, 1920, voted to form a Labor party in spite of the tactless opposition of Daniel J. Tobin, treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, who appeared on behalf of the non-partisan campaign. Mr. Mitch was a member of a committee delegated to send a telegram to Gompers announcing the formation of the Labor party of Indiana. The message condemned the American Federation of Labor policy as "impractical and absolutely unsuccessful," which brought an assertion from Gompers that this was an attack on the trade-union movement. Further correspondence followed, and Gompers attempted to persuade Mitch that the Labor party movement was futile.

to feel and express." A Labor party leader characterized this statement at the time by remarking that "the American Federation of Labor is trying to scare everyone to death who dares rise up and oppose its political ideas."[1]

The second convention of the Labor party of Illinois met in Springfield on June 4 and 5, 1920, and nominated a state ticket, as follows: governor, John H. Walker, Springfield; United States senator, John Fitzpatrick, Chicago; lieutenant-governor, Charles Dold, Chicago; secretary of state, Charles J. Esper, Chicago; state auditor, John R. Schaefer, Belleville; state treasurer, John B. Lennon, Bloomington; attorney-general, William E. Rodriguez, Chicago; clerk of the Supreme Court, Alois Towers, Belleville; university trustees, Agnes Nestor, Chicago; Madge Argo, Joliet; Pearl Nameth, Eldorado; congressman-at-large, Gifford Ernst, Eldorado; Robert F. Weber, Chicago. It also added a few planks to the platform, most important of which was the anti-injunction article being proposed by labor in the constitutional convention, continued Duncan McDonald as state chairman, named John Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Gifford Ernst to represent Illinois on the National Committee, and selected a list of presidential electors.[2]

This state convention of 1920 was smaller than the one of the year before at which the party had been organized, but John Walker remarked in accepting the nomination that it was "the first in the history of political conventions of workers where there had been absolutely no disharmony or dissension."[3]

The national convention of the Labor party which followed was also noticeably smaller than that of 1919. The Illinois delegation, instead of representing 241 local unions

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 115, quoting *New Majority*, March 27, 1920, p. 2.

[2] *WN*, June 2, 1920; *New Majority*, June 12, 1920.

[3] Bigham, *op. cit.*, p. 141; *New Majority*, June 12, 1920.

and 16 central bodies as it had the year before, now represented 171 local unions and 2 central bodies.[1] In fact, the Cook County, state, and national Labor party conventions of 1920 were all smaller than those of 1919; they also contained a smaller proportion of trade unionists, who had been the backbone of the party, and more representatives of miscellaneous groups.

A large part of the decline in representation in the 1920 convention . . . . may perhaps be attributed to the opposition of the American Federation of Labor. Labor party leaders in Illinois said that the opposition of certain leaders in the labor movement had become quite prominent. Some of them who ran for office on the labor party tickets said that they had been accused of improper motives by labor leaders who knew better.[2]

There is also reason to believe that some unions which supported the Labor party were actually opposed to the movement. One large union in Chicago, for example, paid dues to the Labor party although the great body of the membership were admittedly against it; the officers favored independent political action and were able to get the money by "subterfuges that are a little less than illegal."[3]

When the Labor party was joined by certain farm groups, the Non-Partisan League, and the Committee of Forty-eight in its national convention of 1920 it took on a more motley appearance and changed its name to the Farmer-Labor party. Efforts to obtain Senator Robert M. LaFollette's consent to run on the Farmer-Labor ticket failed; the party nominated P. P. Christensen for president and Max Hayes for vice-president. Dissension and conflict appeared in the framing of the platform, but the trade-union group was strong enough to secure the adoption of its own program, in

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[2] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 127, citing proceedings of the second convention, Labor Party of Illinois, June, 1920, pp. 14–16.

[3] *Ibid.*, quoting p. 23.

the main, with a moderating influence from the Forty-eighters.[1]

Then the campaign started, and John H. Walker in Illinois stressed "profiteering" as the main issue. He quoted from reports which showed the huge war earnings of certain industrial corporations, and made much of the activities of Attorney-General Palmer and governmental repression of the mine strike under the war-time Lever Act.[2]

Victor A. Olander, though he had never favored a Labor party and had attended none of its conventions except that at which Walker was nominated, and then only at the urgent request of the Executive Board of the State Federation of Labor, took over the management of the "Walker for Governor" campaign. All the resources of the State Federation of Labor were thrown behind it. The Walker for Governor State Campaign Committee consisted of the Executive Board members of the Federation and an officer of the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union. Local legislative committees, non-partisan American Federation of Labor committees, and voluntary groups were called upon to act as local "Walker for Governor" groups; the State Federation of Labor urged everyone connected with its affiliated organizations to work together on the one big

[1] The national platform fell under nine heads:

1. One hundred per cent Americanism, meaning free speech, free press, etc.
2. Abolition of imperialism at home and abroad.
3. Democratic control of industry.
4. Public ownership.
5. Promotion of agricultural prosperity.
6. Reform of government finance.
7. Reduction in the cost of living.
8. Bonus for soldiers.
9. Labor's Bill of Rights, which included such things as insurance, unemployment measures, rehabitation of the industrially unfit, etc.—Bigham, *op. cit.*, p. 142, quoting *New Majority*, July 17, 1920.

[2] *New Majority*, October 9, 1920, November 6, 1920.

issue of electing Walker, regardless of differences that might exist on other candidates. The appeal was "here is a chance to elect a trade unionist," or at least to poll a large vote in his favor and thus strengthen labor's position before the constitutional convention. By concentrating these additional efforts on the head of the state ticket, supplementing the regular Farmer-Labor party canvass, it was hoped that a sizable showing might be made.[1]

Many labor organizations that continued to believe in the American Federation of Labor non-partisan policy were nevertheless willing to indorse Walker as the most favorable candidate for the governorship. Some of the railroad unions, for example, did not join the Labor party, but after sending questionnaires to the different candidates and examining the platforms recommended Walker.[2] In Chicago, Mary McDowell, of the University of Chicago Settlement, at the request of Secretary Olander, organized a group of social workers and society women into a "Women's Walker Committee."[3] The Galesburg convention of the State Federation, which met before election, indorsed Walker's candidacy and advised adherence to the Farmer-Labor party.

Some of the Socialists were among the most vigorous opponents of the Farmer-Labor party. They proposed in the State Federation convention that the party should combine with the Socialist organization into one "militant" movement. President Walker remarked that "after twenty-five years experience with the forces the resolution asks us to bring together, I am not sure there will not be an explosion the minute we get them together." The proposal was defeated.[4]

[1] *WN*, October 9, 1920; V. A. Olander in *Proc.* (1920), p. 170; interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] Interview, Dennis J. McCarthy.

[3] *WN*, October 30, 1920.

[4] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 149–50.

The passage of a motion to establish a special order of business during the convention for the purpose of political discussion occasioned comment. "I think this is the first time in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor that we ever reached the place where such a motion could be made without a heated battle being started," said Walker; and Delegate Bertolero observed that if the Federation had entered on the political field in 1913 "it would have scared the delegates in this hall to death." As a matter of fact, the convention did seem to be trembling in its boots most of the time, wondering apprehensively what fire from heaven might descend on a labor organization that dared to desert the time-honored political policy of the American Federation of Labor to bow before a different shrine.[1]

The election results were disappointing to the Farmer-Labor party. Warren G. Harding, the Republican candidate for President, won nationally by a landslide; Christensen received less than 1 per cent of the total vote. In Illinois he polled 49,630 out of 2,090,468 ballots. John Walker received 56,480 votes for governor. The surprising thing about it was that only a small proportion of the Farmer-Labor vote came from Cook County. Christensen gathered only 4,966 votes there and Walker only 3,666. Fitzpatrick, who had polled 55,990 as the mayoralty candidate in 1919, received

[1] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 118, 231. When the time for the special order arrived Delegate Anderson of the Painters' Union moved to continue with the regular business, and a motion to table his suggestion failed to carry. For a time it looked as though the Labor party men had lost out; there was talk of a special evening session for the political discussion. But on direct vote Delegate Anderson's motion was defeated, and the convention invited "the candidate for Governor on the Farmer-Labor party ticket" to accept the privilege of its floor. Thereupon Walker made his address, Olander reported on the progress of the campaign, and the Federation ordered their speeches to be printed in pamphlet form and distributed throughout the state.—*Proc.* (1920), pp. 168–86.

only 4,760 votes in Cook County as a candidate for the United States Senate in 1920.[1]

One explanation of this situation and of the small Farmer-Labor vote generally may lie with the Socialist party. Debs received 74,747 votes in Illinois, more than the total credited to any Farmer-Laborite, and of these 52,475 came from Cook County. Presumably the Socialists drew the radical labor vote from Chicago.[2] As for the rest of the labor vote, the *New Majority* explained, "Workers disregarded the Farmer-Labor party appeal, the Socialist appeal and the Gompers—American Federation of Labor appeal and vented their revenge on the Wilson administration for its effort to smash labor in the coal, steel, and railroad strikes by voting for Harding."[3]

John H. Walker asserted that Farmer-Labor votes had been thrown out by old-party machines:

> From the information we have we are satisfied that the Farmer-Labor party was defrauded out of at least a hundred thousand votes in Chicago alone. . . . . In one of the districts downstate a member of the legislature contested the election in the courts, and the recount made a difference of 7,000 votes in that one county in his favor. . . . . It is almost a surety that every other candidate was defrauded in the same way, and, from the information we have, we are satisfied that this was done everywhere in Illinois.[4]

Different factions, of course, interpreted the result differently. Labor party enthusiasts recovered partially from their discouragement and took comfort in local successes. John H. Walker pointed out some of these in his report to the State Federation convention in the fall of 1921 and concluded, "At the present time labor has greater representation, more substantial influence in the different

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 140; *Chicago Daily News Almanac*, 1920, p. 233.

[2] Sell, *loc. cit.*

[3] November 6, 1920.

[4] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 68–69.

industrial centers in our state than it ever had before, all of which was due to the determined and practical effort made by the workers during that campaign."[1] The *New Majority* argued that the stampede to the Republican fold "completely eliminates the Democratic party," leaving the field clear between the reactionary Republican party and the progressive Farmer-Labor party.[2] Supporters of Gompers, of course, declared that the election had only proved once more the futility of a Labor party movement—though, in truth, the American Federation of Labor's non-partisan policy had been no more effective than the Farmer-Labor party against the tide of reaction that swept back to "normalcy." The American Federation of Labor had carried on an intensive campaign and spent more than $50,000, but its position in Congress was not strengthened, and it had bet on the wrong horse in backing Cox.[3] One virtue of the non-partisan policy, however, is that defeat under it is never so apparent or so smashing.

The election of 1920 spelled the doom of the Labor party movement in Illinois. Those leaders who, like Victor Olander, had gone in only halfway, and that with misgivings, now refused to continue. Others, like John Walker, began inwardly to waver, though he did not publicly yield to the persuasions of the American Federation of Labor adherents for some time. Edward Nockels and John Fitzpatrick held out till the bitter end and came over only in 1924 when all hope was gone. Duncan McDonald had no official position in the trade-union movement and did not come over at all.

Back in 1919 President McDonald had remarked on the unfavorable reaction in the legislature which the formation of a Labor party was producing. The impression that it made

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *New Majority*, November 6, 1920.

[3] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

no difference what a member might do for or against labor, since he would be opposed by a Labor party candidate at the polls anyway, was industriously fostered by the employers' lobby.[1] In 1921 the Joint Labor Legislative Board found similar difficulties and came out with a statement on "Political Methods" in which it declared that the Labor party venture had diminished its influence in the General Assembly. Two of the best friends of labor in the legislature, K. C. Ronalds, of Harrisburg, and R. G. Soderstrom, of Streator, had been defeated in the primaries because the Farmer-Labor party had urged workers to stay away in order to validate its own petitions. Furthermore, having had nothing to do with the election of the legislators, and having actually run candidates against many of them, the representatives of organized labor were treated with scant courtesy when they came asking for favors. The board urged "that more practical and sensible methods be used by labor in dealing with political matters than those which resulted in defeating these most capable and reliable representatives."[2]

President Walker, too, recommended "practical" methods in his report to the 1921 convention, though he advocated that the workers continue to build up their own political organization. The Farmer-Labor party had decided to put no candidates in the field in certain districts where such action would merely assure the election of a man favored by the coal-operators and packing-house interests; in such situations it favored the election of the more acceptable of the two old-party nominees. In certain other localities it had decided to support the Socialist ticket. These tactics, he said, were working to the immediate advantage of laboring people, and ultimately they would result in building

[1] *Proc.* (1919), pp. 91–92.

[2] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 178–80.

up an organization powerful enough and unified enough to solve the political problems of labor.[1]

The State Federation convention indorsed these remarks and also adopted a report of its Committee on Officers' Reports which declared that

> politically we are passing through a period of transition; old methods and organizations have been discovered to be ineffective; new methods and new organizations have not yet been fully developed. Our future in the political arena is in the making, and let us take care that we do not break it by impatient and hasty action or retard it by hesitating when we should forge ahead, and thereby lose our golden opportunity.

Perhaps this last was intended to offset the Joint Board's deprecating attitude toward Labor party action. The committee "most earnestly" recommended "that every delegate . . . . do all in his power to build up and strengthen the Farmer-Labor party. . . . ."[2]

The Farmer-Labor party of Illinois had many difficulties during 1921. The radicals and the old parties were boring from within, the *New Majority* was in arrears, the organization lacked funds, and the unemployment situation created by the industrial depression was undermining its trade-union support.[3] Nevertheless, it held its third state convention in Aurora just prior to the convening of the State Federation in the same city and revised its organization and its platform.[4] Reviewing the national situation, Secretary-Treasurer J. G. Brown said twenty states now had Farmer-Labor parties; while in South Dakota, Minnesota, and Washington, the

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 68–69.

[2] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 310–11. A plan for financing the National Farmer-Labor party which called for contributions of one dollar a month from each local union was indorsed; the officers were instructed to do everything in their power to increase the circulation of the *New Majority*.—*Ibid.*, pp. 34, 216, 379.

[3] Bigham, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–43, citing "Minutes of the Chicago Federation of Labor," March 20, 1921, July, 1921.

[4] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 303–6.

Farmer-Labor party had won second place, thereby displacing the Democrats.[1]

Early in 1922 the believers in the American Federation of Labor policy administered another slap to the labor party movement through the Joint Labor Legislative Board. At the request of legislative representatives of the railway brotherhoods who held membership on the joint board, the Executive Board of the State Federation agreed to call a conference for the purpose of laying plans to deal "in a practical way" with the approaching legislative elections. It decided that representatives of the Farmer-Labor party might be invited to attend "unofficially."[2]

At that conference Victor Olander and the other conservative members of the Joint Board succeeded in securing the adoption of their program, though some acrimonious discussion took place.[3] The conference said,

> We believe that the workers' organizations in the different senatorial districts should determine for themselves whether or not they want to put candidates of their own political organization in the field or whether they desire to support the candidates of other organizations. We believe in this matter the necessities of the situation require that no candidates should be put in the field by the workers themselves except where they have a reasonable assurance of electing such candidates or where there are no candidates on other tickets that can be depended upon to support labor's program.

The Joint Labor Legislative Board was provided with an income on a dues-paying basis in order that it might have funds with which to carry on a non-partisan campaign in the legislative elections.[4]

The Farmer-Labor party again placed candidates in the field in the elections of 1922, and again the results were most

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 286.

[2] *Minutes of Executive Board*, January 19, 1922, in *WN*, January 28, 1922.

[3] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[4] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 146–51.

disappointing. In accordance with nominations made at Aurora the previous October, Robert M. Buck, editor of the *New Majority*, headed the state ticket as candidate for state treasurer. In Cook County, Secretary Nockels, of the Chicago Federation, ran for sheriff, Charles Dold for clerk of the criminal court, and other trade unionists for various county and municipal offices. Farmer-Labor candidates polled only from four to six thousand votes in Cook County; the Socialist ticket again received more support than the Farmer-Labor. "The evidence pointed to the dominance of the American Federation of Labor non-partisan policy."[1]

The national Farmer-Labor party was also on the down grade. Its third convention, held in Chicago on May 27, 1922, attracted only seventy-two delegates from eighteen scattered states. Here and there over the country it achieved sporadic successes—in Washington, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota—but in the main it showed little power.[2]

When the Illinois State Federation of Labor assembled again in the fall of 1922, at Rockford, labor party affairs were left severely alone, except that when a resolution indorsing independent political action and the Farmer-Labor party was brought forward by a Collinsville miners' local the convention disposed of it by agreeing "unanimously" without a word of discussion.[3] So the Federation was still on record in favor of a labor party, but it was no longer enthusiastic.

Then came the final blow. A national convention of the Farmer-Labor party meeting in Chicago on July 3, 1923, was packed and captured by Communists led by William Z. Foster; they imposed their own program upon it and changed the name to Federated Farmer-Labor party. Less radical

[1] Bigham, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–44.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Proc.* (1922), p. 228.

members withdrew, and some of them tried to keep the old Farmer-Labor party alive after the split, but their efforts were in vain. The Labor party movement had acquired the taint of Communism. Henceforth for a few years the middle ground on the subject of labor's political policy was to be no-man's-land. There was little room for a "progressive" trade unionist to advocate a Labor party; either he must come into the fold of the American Federation of Labor and its "age-old non-partisan political policy," or he must betake himself into outer darkness with the fanatical Communists.

It had been pointed out to John H. Walker that, among other things, he might endanger the Illinois State Federation of Labor if he persisted in his Labor party activities, and he had been gradually coming over to the American Federation of Labor policy for some time.[1] In September, 1923, he made one of the principal speeches in opposition to resolutions for independent political action which came before the American Federation of Labor convention.[2]

When the Illinois State Federation of Labor assembled at Decatur, therefore, in 1913, it was ready to abandon the Labor party venture. Not only that, it was anxious to repudiate all connection with a policy that had now become a rallying cry of the radicals and was hopelessly entangled with Communism. A few regular trade unionists still hoped to reassemble the Labor party and move on to ultimate success, but leadership toward independent political action had been

[1] Robert M. Buck, formerly editor of the *New Majority*, says that Walker was "forced" out of the party by associates such as Samuel Gompers, Matthew Woll, Victor Olander, and George Perkins. He had previously placed himself under obligations to Gompers, and Olander had been his campaign manager in 1920. Pressure could thus be brought to bear on him. "This," comments Bigham in his study previously quoted, "was simply one of the examples of the picking off of the leaders of the party by the American Federation of Labor."—Bigham, *op. cit.*, p. 146, citing interview with Robert M. Buck.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 287.

usurped by William Z. Foster, and it was he who now marshaled the forces in opposition to the non-partisan political principle.

The fight began Wednesday morning over a resolution introduced under instructions from the Chicago Federation of Labor; it called upon the American Federation of Labor to form an independent political party of its own based upon trade unions, farmer, and other organizations in harmony with the organized-labor movement. The committee "could not see anything else in this resolution than a command from a legislative body to the American Federation of Labor as to what the American Federation of Labor should do"; therefore it recommended that the introducers take the matter up through their international unions.

George W. Briggs, of the Milk Wagon Drivers' Union, argued that there was no use in sending a State Federation delegate to the American Federation of Labor convention with his one vote among 43,000 to propose a project like this. Let it be done through the international unions, if at all. President Walker spoke against the resolution. "From experience men get a new light and they change their views," he said. As though there were not enough political parties for labor already without starting a new one! There is nothing more harmful to the political interests of labor than refusing to go with the majority once a decision is made; "I don't care how bad the policy is, if we will stick together we will get better results than if we adopt the best policy and fight among ourselves." Later, speaking to a question of "personal privilege," he answered references to the success of the British Labor party; the British Labor party, he argued, was really the outcome of a policy like that of the American Federation of Labor. Secretary Olander said that experience had shown the feeling for a Labor party was by no means so widespread as had been thought. Now the Communists,

through the Workers' party, were attempting to dominate such movements. The constitutional campaign of 1922 had demonstrated that the most effective political channel for labor was through the regular trade unions, and not through a Labor party.

Delegate Wills, of the Machinists' Union, Thomas and Slinger, of the United Mine Workers, among others, but mainly Lillian Herstein and William Z. Foster defended the resolution. Miss Herstein, of the Chicago Women High School Teachers, pointed out that "you don't always lose when you don't elect a candidate." The Republicans and Democrats had taken over Socialist planks after they had been popularized by a minority party. She was heartily opposed to asking favors of "Len Small or Thompson or the *Chicago Tribune*," all of whom had stolen from the teachers and the people. Foster was suave and clever; he answered the points of his opponents one by one. He thought it a dangerous assumption for the committee to make that the State Federation had no jurisdiction in matters of this kind; certainly it could instruct its delegates to the American Federation of Labor. The Illinois Federation had a reputation for progress and for meeting issues fairly; "Let us not duck the issue . . . . . Let us say whether we are for a labor party or against it." Secretary Olander had taken pains to show that the Communists were behind the resolution; this was dragging a red herring across the trail, said Foster: "We must consider this resolution on its merits, regardless of whether the devil himself wrote it." He had hoped that he would never hear President Walker make a speech like that of the morning; "for him to take that position is nothing less than a disaster to the labor movement of this country." There had been a lot said about radicals being active in the unions; but "that is the reason for it. Our leaders are abandoning these big issues and leaving

it to the radicals to fight them through. As fast as they abandon them the radicals will pick them up." He spoke of the injunction; what progress was being made against it? "The American workers at this time are practically a political zero."

The debate continued all day, and gradually grew warmer and warmer. Vice-President Oscar Nelson, of the Chicago Federation, who had led the battle against the "radicals" on the floor of that organization, closed the debate for opponents of the resolution with a resort to angry personalities. He was bitter against Foster and his followers because they were trying to disrupt the American labor movement and had called him and other officials "pie-counter patriots." Adoption of the resolution would merely afford propaganda for this element that was trying to promote dissension. He had formerly admitted when he differed with Foster that the latter was honest, but now he had changed his opinion.[1]

Foster demanded the floor on a question of personal privilege to answer these personal attacks, but President Walker put to a vote the question of allowing Foster to speak again, and he was denied the privilege. Secretary Olander had reported that there was a movement on foot in the rear of the hall to force delay and adjournment in order to continue the discussion into the next day. Then came a division on the issue, the resolution went down to defeat, 456 to 65, and the Illinois State Federation of Labor repudiated its policy of independent political action.[2]

The Chicago Federation of Labor, under the leadership of Fitzpatrick and Nockels, held out for several months longer

[1] Here a delegate raised a point of order. "Is this a fight between these two delegates?"—*Proc.* (1923), p. 349.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 353. The original resolution and the debate are included in pp. 313–53.

in support of the movement it had inaugurated. A provisional state party was set up with Fitzpatrick as chairman, and there were attempts to persuade Senator LaFollette to run for president on the Farmer-Labor ticket in 1924. But this hope fell through, the radical Workers' party (Communist) element had permeated the movement, and there was a great confusion of parties and fragments of parties lying about. Furthermore, officers of the Chicago Federation had been subjected to various kinds of pressure from the American Federation of Labor, and the Federation's finances were running low.[1]

On May 18, 1924, President Fitzpatrick read a brief statement on the Labor party movement to an unusually large meeting of the Chicago Federation of Labor and recommended that "we cast our lot with that of the American Federation of Labor." The Chicago Federation had been left holding the bag long enough, he said. The original hope had been to organize a self-sustaining movement supported by individual contributions; the Federation would have been the economic arm and the Labor party the political arm of the labor movement. The idea was good enough, and would have worked except for what is likely to happen in any political situation "where other programs will be injected and where there is no responsibility." In order to end the confusion and prevent further exploitation of labor unions and farm organizations, the Federation must cut loose and hope that some time later when the skies had cleared labor might find its political position. "The rank and file have not subscribed to the program we launched, and . . . . there is

[1] One of the deeiding blows to the Labor party came in June, 1923, when the American Federation of Labor ceased to pay half the organizing expenses of President Fitzpatrick and half the office rent of the Chicago Federation. The organizer employed by the Chicago Federation of Labor, Anton Johansen, was forced to resign and return to his trade; the Federation and its officers were faced by a serious curtailment of funds.—Bigham, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–48.

no hope for that to happen now or in the near future." The Federation agreed with its president by a large majority—his recommendation was opposed by two delegates connected with the Workers' party, but they received scant support—and thus ended the venture into independent political action so far as the regular trade-union movement of Illinois was concerned.[1]

Concurrently with this action by the Chicago Federation the leaders who had stayed with the Farmer-Labor party of the United States (the original one, not the Communist controlled "Federated Farmer-Labor party" which later dropped the word Federated from its name) formally gave up the hopeless struggle. They said in public statement:

On one hand the Communists have undertaken to kidnap the June 17 convention at St. Paul, and on the other, the Conference for Progressive Political Action has undertaken to capitalize the LaFollette-for-president boom. The obstreperous crowd likely to control the June 17 convention cannot build a working class political party; the C. P. P. A. will not. It would appear that for the Farmer-Labor party to run its own national ticket this year would be only further to confuse the situation, and that the only choice left the party is to endorse the independent candidacy of LaFollette.

The statement was signed by J. G. Brown, national secretary; John Fitzpatrick, member national committee; David A. McVey, secretary Illinois branch and chairman Cook County branch; Charles F. Will, vice-chairman Illinois branch; and Robert M. Buck, editor of the official party organ.[2]

In the national campaign of 1924 the American Federation of Labor, the Illinois State Federation, the Chicago Federation, and those Labor party leaders who had stayed with the ship till the last were all united once more in sup-

[1] *WN*, May 24, 1924, and "Minutes of Chicago Federation of Labor," May 18, 1924.

[2] *WN*, May 24, 1924.

port of the independent candidacy of Senator LaFollette. The method, however, was that of indorsement under the policy of non-partisan political action, and this method has not been challenged by the Illinois State Federation of Labor and its constituent organizations since that time.

In fact, since its return to the orthodox American Federation of Labor fold, the Illinois State Federation of Labor has been extremely chary about dual political movements or any action which might antagonize the parent body. When a Plumb Plan League was being organized in Illinois, and when approached by officers of various railway unions on a project for organizing a state branch of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, the Executive Board first consulted the wishes of Gompers and announced

> that in the opinion of the Executive Board of the Illinois State Federation of Labor the formation of organizations which may be considered dual to federations or other organizations already in existence and functioning as properly chartered bodies is not conducive to the best interests of the trade union movement.[1]

[1] *Minutes of Executive Board*, December 19, 1922, in *WN*, December 30, 1922. The same resolution was reaffirmed in connection with the C. P. P. A. overtures one year later.—*Minutes of Executive Board*, December 5, 1923, in *WN*, December 8, 1923.

CHAPTER XXIII

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER AND THE LEFT WING

William Z. Foster[1] was born in Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1881 of Irish and English parentage. He went to work when ten years of age, after only three years of schooling. As a youth he was impressed by the many strikes in the anthracite coal fields near Philadelphia, where his family had moved, and at nineteen years of age became a Socialist. From then on he read everything he could find of a revolutionary nature and gradually moved from right to left in his conceptions; in 1909 he was expelled from the Socialist party on account of his radical tendencies. Soon afterward he joined the Industrial Workers of the World, took an active part in the "free-speech fight" in Spokane, and was arrested in connection with his work there. In 1910 he went to Europe and spent thirteen months studying the labor movements of France, Germany, Austria, and other countries. He was a delegate from the Industrial Workers of the World to the Budapest conference (1910) of the International Trade Union Secretariat, and objected to the seating of Vice-President Duncan of the American Federation of Labor in that conference on the ground that the American Federation of Labor was a capitalistic institution. He held that the Industrial Workers of the World was the only real organization of working people in the United States.

[1] This account of his life and activities is taken from Earl R. Beckner's study, *The Trade Union Educational League and the American Labor Movement*, a Master's thesis of the University of Chicago, Department of Political Economy (1924). Most of this chapter is based on the same source. Mr. Beckner's study in condensed form was published in the *Journal of Political Economy*, XXXIII (August, 1925), 410–31.

While in Europe he became a syndicalist, and determined henceforth to oppose the I.W.W. policy of dual unionism, that is, the policy of setting up new unions designed to replace those already existing. When he returned to America he tried to induce the members of the I.W.W. and other revolutionaries to rejoin the trade-union movement, but without avail. He then left the I.W.W. and in 1912 organized and became secretary of the Syndicalist League of North America. This organization attempted to propagate syndicalist tactics and principles among all groups of organized and unorganized workers on the continent. It emphasized the class struggle and tried to persuade the militants to work within the already existing unions rather than to break away and start new ones more to their liking. Political action was condemned as being worse than useless. For a time, the S. L. of N. A. made quite a stir, and secured a grip upon the labor movements of many cities; but the workmen generally did not espouse it, and it passed out of existence after two years of activity.

Foster made a second attempt to organize the radicals within the regular trade unions in 1916, when he founded the International Trade Union Educational League. A few groups were set up here and there, but the League acquired little influence and expired in 1917.

Foster then apparently became a "regular." He was secretary of the campaign put on by the Chicago Federation of Labor to organize the stockyards workers, and was thus associated with the prominent regular trade unionists of Chicago, among whom were John Fitzpatrick, Edward Nockels, and Victor A. Olander. This was in 1917. Later, when the effort was made to organize the steel-workers, Foster was again made secretary, and demonstrated remarkable ability as a promoter, organizer, and administrator in the great strike which followed. He was in the Pittsburgh district, where the fight was hardest and the work the most difficult. During the period when he was on friendly terms with the labor leaders of Chicago, he was unanimously elected by the Chicago Federation of Labor as its delegate to the A. F. of L. convention.

He was a delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor from Local 453 of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America.

During the time that Foster was a "regular," he apparently did not change his fundamental views, though he led his associates to believe that he had discarded his

I.W.W. doctrines. Russian Communism did not appear until after 1917. In November, 1920, he founded the Trade Union Educational League, his third attempt at organizing the radicals within the old-line trade unions. Communism in America, as exemplified by Soviet Russia, was the ultimate goal of the League, and the means to be used in putting it into effect were chiefly two: industrial unionism through the amalgamation of the existing craft unions and political action through an independent Labor party.

Though the Trade Union Educational League was founded in the autumn of 1920, active work did not begin until February, 1922, after Foster's return from a trip to Russia. There he had long conferences with leaders of the Red International of Labor Unions and submitted his plan to the Communist International in which it was discussed at length by Radek and Lenin. After it was approved in Moscow, Foster laid the plan before the Central Executive Committee of the Communist party of America, which indorsed it, and also before the Workers' party, which likewise indorsed it. Then he started his agitation.

Circular letters were sent to hundreds of militants in all the principal cities in the country urging them to form local groups of rebel unionists. The *Labor Herald*, monthly official organ of the League, was launched in March, 1922. The Trade Union Educational League did not endeavor to set up new unions; it discouraged "dual unionism." Its policy was rather to "keep the militants in the unions," to establish within the existing organizations groups of progressives and radicals who would oppose at every turn the reactionary policies of the officials in power, to further every policy that would promote solidarity and fighting spirit in the unions, and finally to gain control so that its ultimate purpose of the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' republic might be accomplished.

Chicago, where Foster himself led the battle, was the center of the League's activities. Its propaganda was fought over on the floor of the Chicago Federation of Labor and from there carried to the Illinois State Federation of Labor and even to the American Federation of Labor itself.[1] On March 19, 1922, the Chicago Federation of Labor went on record in favor of industrial unionism with a resolution calling upon the American Federation of Labor to bring its international unions into conference "for the purpose of arranging to amalgamate all the various unions into single organizations," each of which should cover an industry. The vote was 113 to 37, and at the next meeting it was reaffirmed by a vote of 103 to 14, a larger majority than before.

Debate on the issue was most heated, however. Vice-President Oscar Nelson headed the attack against amalgamation; he "bitterly assailed the Trade Union Educational League" and

> injected a personal attack upon Foster, calling him an I.W.W. and insinuating that he was a disrupter. President Fitzpatrick was the principal speaker for the resolution at the second meeting. He placed himself completely on the side of amalgamation, and defended Foster, who had been chosen by Gompers, himself, he pointed out, to direct the greatest strike in labor history (the steel strike of 1919). Fitzpatrick challenged anyone to show where that task had not been handled according to the very highest standards of trade unionism.[2]

A few days later there was a large meeting of trade-union officials in Chicago, attended by President Gompers, at which the recent "progressive features" of the Chicago Federation, including the Farmer-Labor party, the *New Majority*, and the amalgamation resolution were attacked. Emmet Flood, an American Federation of Labor organizer,

[1] The League, of course, also carried on its work in many international unions, particularly in the United Mine Workers, in which the struggle that developed was particularly bitter.—*Ibid.*, pp. 74 f.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

led out. Then Foster, who was not in the meeting but hurried over when he heard what was going on, was given the floor and defended the principles of industrial unionism, the amalgamation resolution, and the Trade Union Educational League. John Fitzpatrick also defended the amalgamation resolution and showed the need for greater solidarity of the forces of labor. "He said that the Chicago Federation of Labor was on record for the resolution and would stand or fall by it." Then Gompers spoke. "For an hour he denounced the Trade Union Educational League, the *Labor Herald*, and Foster. The League he called 'an organization attempting to dictate the policies of the labor movement'; the *Labor Herald* was described as 'a monumental, brazen publication'; and Foster was named as one who 'wants to become the Lenin of America.' "[1]

The next few months saw the amalgamation resolution adopted by eight state federations and numerous city central bodies,[2] but for some time the controversy was quiescent in Chicago. Then it came before the Rockford convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in October in the form of a resolution similar to the one adopted by the Chicago Federation. At Rockford it met defeat by a vote of 148 to 119 after a long debate which stuck remarkably close to the issues and was comparatively free from personalities. Matthew Woll, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, who defended the policy of the American Federation of Labor in an address to the convention before the resolution came up, Secretary Olander, and George W. Briggs of the Milk Wagon Drivers (Teamsters) headed the opposition. Gomer Davis, mine-worker, of O'Fallon, led the supporters of the amalgamation resolution, and

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 86–87, citing *Labor Herald*, May, 1922, pp. 17, 31; *New Majority*, April 22, 1922, p. 3.

[2] *New Majority*, October 28, 1922.

the principal address in its behalf was made by Lillian Herstein, of the Chicago Women High School Teachers. President Walker took no part in the debate, but afterward announced to the convention that he had voted in favor of the resolution.[1]

In this Rockford convention of 1922 the amalgamation issue was discussed on its merits and defeated; the attack on the resolution was not centered on the fact that Foster was favoring it, and Communism was not used as a red herring. In fact, Secretary Olander expressed the highest regard for the purposes of those who introduced the resolution, though he hoped "as earnestly as I have ever hoped anything in my life" that it would be voted down.

> I think it is a good thing that it came up. These questions ought to be discussed in the open. I think the men who feel embittered because the workers have not made progress enough have a right to criticize and to call upon men in official positions to justify what has been done and suggest other ways of going ahead.

Nevertheless, proponents of the resolution evidently considered Foster's support somewhat of a liability; Gomer Davis, the first speaker in the debate, announced that he did not favor it because it came from Foster, but because of the experiences of his organization, the miners.[2]

During the next year Foster and his followers continued their persistent agitations, arousing antagonism toward the old-line union officials and setting up irritations wherever possible, until feeling against them in many unions and central bodies became very acute. Lines were now so bitterly drawn that there was virtually no middle ground; progressive trade unionists found themselves forced to choose between going to the extreme left with Foster and the

[1] *New Majority*, October 28, 1922; *Proc.* (1922), pp. 280 f., 352–83.

[2] Beckner, *The Trade Union Educational League* . . . . , pp. 91–92; *Proc.* (1922), pp. 228, 235.

Communists or back to the right with Gompers and the American Federation of Labor.[1] After Foster and his cohorts captured the July 3, 1923, convention of the Farmer-Labor party the tide turned decidedly against him in Chicago. Fitzpatrick and Nockels issued a statement that so far as the Chicago Federation of Labor was concerned, the unfavorable action of the American Federation of Labor on the amalgamation resolution in its 1922 convention was final; and in a postscript they announced that there was no connection between the Chicago Federation or any of its officials and the "so-called" Trade Union Educational League.[2]

The stage was set for a showdown when the Illinois State Federation of Labor met in convention at Decatur, September 10–15, 1923. Over six hundred delegates were in attendance, a larger number than at any preceding or following convention for several years. Foster asserted that the "reactionaries" had jammed the convention with their delegates; he says at least three hundred were paid officials.[3] The statement of Fitzpatrick and Nockels alluded to in the foregoing became one of the most effective weapons of the opposition to Foster; it was printed in the *News Letter* and circulated among the delegates. Press releases sent out by the international headquarters of the United Mine Workers

[1] As has been mentioned above, it is generally considered that the withdrawal of financial support from the Chicago Federation of Labor by the American Federation of Labor, announced by a letter from Gompers in May, 1923, was pressure to bring the former organization back into line. Gompers gave as a reason the financial condition of the American Federation of Labor, which he stated had suffered because of unemployment and the necessity of fighting the open-shop drive of the employers. The funds amounted to about $600 a month.—Beckner, *The Trade Union Educational League* . . . . , p. 90. Gompers' letter is printed in the *New Majority*, May 12, 1923, p. 9.

[2] *WN*, September 8, 1923.

[3] Beckner, *The Trade Union Educational League* . . . . , pp. 92 f.

as part of its campaign against the Communists were in the hands of Federation officials and were timed to appear in the local press of Decatur during convention week.[1] One delegate, protesting that it was not wrong to differ from the American Federation of Labor, avowed that "I never in my life saw more propaganda up to poison the minds of the delegates on certain resolutions."[2]

This, of course, was the view of one side. The officials leading the anti-Foster fight had by this time come to regard his activities as utterly despicable and traitorous, justifying the most extreme counter measures. "I am a sailor," said Secretary Olander, "and to me 'boring from within' has a very significant meaning. It means scuttling the ship."[3] So they determined to repulse Foster's campaign at any cost, and they laid their plans carefully.

On the second day of the convention a letter from Samuel Gompers was read, in which Gompers, evidently writing in response to a request from President Walker, outlined the powers of bodies subordinate to the American Federation of Labor with respect to matters of general policy. The letter spoke of the rights of city central labor bodies and state federations of labor, which must be preserved and protected so long as they do not conflict with the American Federation of Labor as such; but the constitution of the American Federation of Labor and the declarations of principle and policy declared by conventions of the American Federation of Labor must have full application upon both the economic and political fields, and, in addition, with respect to the international relations of labor. It must be remembered, also, said Gompers, that the American Federation of Labor itself is the creation of the national and inter-

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80. See speech of Secretary Olander, *Proc.* (1923), p. 408.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 365.

[3] *Proc.* (1923), p. 406.

national unions and that their entity and integrity must be maintained at all hazards.[1] In short, the Illinois State Federation of Labor was told to keep its hands off certain broad issues such as amalgamation or industrial unionism, independent labor political action, and international labor relations, which were being agitated by the left wing.

Two resolutions almost identical in form were introduced on amalgamation. Resolution No. 8 called upon the Illinois State Federation to help bring about solidarity within the ranks of organized labor, and that as a first step in this direction a conference of the various international unions be called to arrange for amalgamating all the unions in their respective industries into single organizations, each to cover an industry. Resolution No. 30 resolved that the Illinois State Federation of Labor call upon the American Federation of Labor to carry out the same plan.[2]

The Committee on Resolutions included both in its unfavorable report, pointing out that they had been widely circulated "by an organization calling itself the Trade Union Educational League" and had been "used as the basis of recent attacks against the American Federation of Labor and the various national and international unions." They were introduced for propaganda purposes rather than with any thought of securing definite action, said the committee; and in non-concurring it expressed the opinion that "the practices and laws of the American Federation of Labor on this question represent the best interests of the trade union movement."

This report was made on Thursday morning, September 15, and debate on it consumed the rest of the forenoon session. Several miners opened in favor of the resolution;

[1] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 269–70.

[2] Beckner, *Trade Union Educational League*, pp. 94–95. See *Proc.* (1923), pp. 361–424 for the resolutions and debate.

most of them disclaimed any connection with the Trade Union Educational League and regretted that all propositions "for the benefit of the rank and file" were being branded as I.W.W. or Red movements. Delegate Cameron, a foundry worker, thought it was unfortunate that the resolution was couched in the words of the Trade Union Educational League, but he objected to scrapping it on that account. Foster "may be back of it, but there are lots of other men back of it, good sensible men."

George W. Briggs, of the Milk Wagon Drivers' Union, and Delegate Jensen, of the Carpenters' Union, supported the committee. They identified the resolution with the "One Big Union" movement and then maintained that the plan had proved a failure in Winnipeg, Seattle, and elsewhere.

In the afternoon President Walker introduced Matthew Woll, who spoke as the representative of Gompers and the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor. In a long address he bitterly attacked the Trade Union Educational League and William Z. Foster, whom he called "Mr. Imposter." The departmental principle of the American Federation of Labor, he said, offered opportunity for co-operation between the different organizations; they could not be forced together against their wills.

Next morning Foster took the floor, replied to the charges made by Woll, and defended the amalgamation resolution. He pointed to the packing industry, the steel industry, and the railroad industry as examples of the failure of craft unionism. As for the charge that the radicals were back of the amalgamation, Labor party, and recognition of Russia agitations, he admitted it. The very fact that radicals had to push such issues was one of the worst criticisms of the regular trade-union leadership; "This is the only country where radicals are advocating these things." He resented

the charge that he was trying to break up the labor movement; "What I am trying to do is to advocate a system of organization that will make it possible to organize the workers of this country, and that can only come through industrial organization." He wanted amalgamation, but with sufficient specialization within the industrial union so that each craft might find its own problems cared for.

When he had finished Secretary Olander spoke for an hour, devoting most of his time to an attack on Foster and Foster's record, belittling his part in the packing-house and steel strikes, reviewing and exposing his activities in the labor movement. Olander's speech displayed no anger, but it was merciless and devastating. Then President Walker spoke in favor of the committee's report, and immediately thereafter a motion to close debate was put through in spite of vigorous protests from the amalgamationists. Foster asked the floor on a question of personal privilege, but his request was denied. "For an hour a speaker assailed me and I was not given an opportunity to reply," said he. "I object to that as being most unfair."[1] The vote when counted showed 313 to 80 against the amalgamation resolution.

Two other issues that had been taken up and promoted by the left wing were fought out in this same Decatur convention of 1923. One was the independent Labor party policy; the contest over it has been described in the preceding chapter. The other was the recognition of Soviet Russia.

It is interesting to note what had been the attitude of the Federation on this issue before it had become a symbol of the left wing and a rallying cry of the Trade Union Educational League. The Peoria convention of 1919 called upon the United States to withdraw its troops from Russian soil at once and demanded recognition of the Soviet authority

[1] *Proc.* (1923), p. 424.

as "the only form of government that suits and is desired by the great mass of the Russian people." This, as Chairman Madsen of the Resolutions Committee said at the time, was in line with the traditional stand of the Federation for self-determination of all peoples, exemplified in its sympathy with the Irish Republic. The first part of the demand merely followed in the footsteps of the American Federation of Labor; the second went "one step further, but the Illinois State Federation of Labor is always one step ahead of the American Federation of Labor."[1] The Illinois Federation further declared, "No matter what one's opinion of the philosophy of the political party at present in power in Russia, the social experiment in progress in that country is of vital importance to progress and civilization and must be permitted to work itself out without external interference."[2]

The following year the State Federation urged the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to call a conference for the purpose of taking such action as might prevent further attacks upon Russia by the government of the United States.[3] In 1921, after striking out all the "Whereases" in order to avoid controversy, the Illinois Federation again went on record as "demanding that the United States Government recognize the Workers' Soviet Government of Russia and establish full trade relations with that nation so the great distress growing out of the unemployment may be mitigated and the mutual interest of the world's workers may be protected." As President Walker said, this resolution did not commit the Federation to an indorsement of the Soviet system.

All it asks is that we recognize the government . . . . and establish relations that will be helpful to the Russians. . . . . Inasmuch as we recognized

[1] *Proc.* (1919), p. 323.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 332.

[3] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 155–58.

the former government for years—and there has been no worse record of exploitation and oppression of people ever known—it would seem that we might ask our government to recognize the present Russian government.[1]

The 1922 convention reaffirmed the previous stand of the Federation.[2]

Up to this time the Illinois State Federation of Labor had not succumbed to the hysteria with which various groups in the country had succeeded in surrounding the words "Soviet Russia." But now the lines were drawn more tightly; the Trade Union Educational League, William Z. Foster, and all his works must be repudiated. Since Foster had begun to demand loudly that labor should insist on recognition of Russia and to chide the American Federation of Labor for not doing so, the Illinois State Federation must not give him aid and comfort by continuing its own demand on the subject. The era of after-war progressivism in the Federation during which it prided itself on being "one step ahead" of the American Federation of Labor was over; the reaction had come, and the Illinois Federation had to align itself strictly with the American Federation or wholly with Foster. After the lengthy battles over political action and amalgamation the delegates made short shrift of the resolution demanding recognition of Soviet Russia. The vote was 350 to 80, nearly the same as on amalgamation, showing how closely the factional lines were drawn.[3]

Thus the rebellion engineered by William Z. Foster was utterly crushed in this strategic convention. But, announced that scintillating agitator, "You are not defeating any radicals; you are turning over to the hands of the radicals the

[1] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 373–78. The Federation also unanimously indorsed the "Friends of Soviet Russia," and recommended that labor organizations aid that society morally and materially.—*Ibid.*, p. 364.

[2] *Proc.* (1922), p. 235.

[3] *Proc.* (1923), pp. 425–30.

wonderful issue of amalgamation and the wonderful issue of a labor party."[1]

The report of delegates who had attended the Illinois State Federation of Labor convention provided the occasion for the final break between the adherents of Foster and the progressive but anti-Communist officers of the Chicago Federation of Labor. The delegates submitted a report to the Chicago Federation of Labor which concluded that the "actions of the convention were thoroughly representative of the trade-union movement of the state, and were such as to promote the best interests of the working people of Illinois." Foster objected; he said adoption of the report would mean the repudiation of the progressive work done by the Chicago Federation in the last few years. The report was adopted, 114 to 26. Thereafter the struggle between Foster's adherents and those of Fitzpatrick and Nockels took place in nearly every meeting for some months, with the Foster group decidedly in the minority.[2]

Since 1923 the work of agitation in Illinois has been carried on by a small but well-disciplined and active group of Fosters' colleagues. There have been no pitched battles in the State Federation since the decisive defeat at Decatur. Rather, the Trade Union Educational League and Workers' party propagandists have fallen back on guerrilla warfare tactics, sniping and pestering the opposition at every point where there seems to be an opening, irritating continually with cleverly drawn resolutions on amalgamation, independent political action, recognition of Russia, anti-imperialism,

[1] *Proc.* (1923), p. 433.

[2] Beckner, *Trade Union Educational League* . . . . , p. 89. It is said that Foster was practically driven from the meetings of the Chicago Federation of Labor by the constant pressure put upon him.—Bigham, *op. cit.*, p. 129. He was never formally expelled, however, and his friends say that he left in order to take charge of operations on a national scale.—Interview, Carl Haessler, of the Federated Press; interview, Arne Schwabek, of the Workers' party.

unemployment, militarism, capital punishment, the Sacco-Vanzetti case, reform of the American Federation of Labor, citizens' military training camps, nationalization of mines and railways, in fact any issue that can be turned to their purposes. The handful of zealous Communists delegated to each convention performs its work systematically and deliberately, expecting nothing but defeat for its proposals, content to thrust its propaganda forward in the "Whereas" clauses of its resolutions or in brief speeches, unperturbed and even happy when the regular unionists are inspired to wrathful denunciation.

In defense, the Federation has adopted the tactics of eschewing all things Communist. The Trade Union Educational League or the *Daily Worker* is not to be given any opportunities to shout that the Illinois State Federation of Labor has indorsed a sentiment proposed by them. The Resolutions Committee has developed a marvelous capacity for discovering the taint in the most carefully disguised and innocent-appearing resolutions. Nothing with a subversive origin has had a ghost of a chance since 1923.

CHAPTER XXIV

LEGISLATIVE METHODS, 1914–29

THE JOINT LABOR LEGISLATIVE BOARD

The split over workmen's compensation in 1911 seriously divided the forces of labor at Springfield, which had been co-operating during each General Assembly since 1905 through the medium of a more or less informal labor conference. The bitterness engendered by this dispute carried over into the next session, and when the legislature of 1913 began its work, one group of labor legislative representatives was quartered at the Leland Hotel, another had its rooms at the Nicholas, and there was a gulf between them. Finally an emissary from the Nicholas camp—one of the railway brotherhood men—rented a room in the Leland and brought some of the two groups together. They decided that the representatives of organized labor must cease their bickering and present a united front. The Joint Labor Legislative Board was the result.[1]

This unification of effort came about late in the 1913 session while President Wright and Secretary Morris still represented the State Federation of Labor. W. W. Carroll, of the Railway Conductors, was the first presiding officer of the new Joint Board.[2] The railroad brotherhoods were also represented by fraternal delegates in the State Federation convention of 1913, and the Committee on Fraternal Relations reported that "in the legislative work of this Federation the Railroad Brotherhood now stands as a unit with all

[1] Interview, Dennis J. McCarthy, legislative representative of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen at Springfield for many years and secretary of the Joint Labor Legislative Board.

[2] *Ibid.*

other organizations of labor in the state in the effort to secure favorable legislation for the workers generally." The railroad men's delegates, for their part, presented a resolution in which they expressed appreciation for "the great help extended us at the last session of the Legislature."[1]

When the next General Assembly met, the Joint Board started functioning at the first of the session, and not only consulted together and adopted united policies on issues that arose at the capitol, but for the first time issued a joint report. Previously each group of labor lobbyists had made out a separate report for its own organization. The result was that members of the Senate and House would vote favorably on mining laws and get a clean bill of health from the United Mine Workers to prove in their next campaign that they were friends of labor; but they would oppose all other labor bills. Or they would vote for measures backed by the Electrical Workers and quote the agents of that union to establish their labor record, at the same time fighting every other labor proposal. Starting in 1915, all the organizations represented on the Joint Board have united on one report, presenting the attitude of each member of the Assembly on all labor measures and basing its recommendations thereon.[2]

At the 1915 session the Joint Board comprised representatives of the following organizations: Illinois State Federation of Labor, Illinois Mine Workers, Chicago Federation of Labor, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Order of Railway Conductors, Switchmen's Union of North America, Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union of America,[3] State Teachers' Associa-

[1] *Proc.* (1913), p. 205.

[2] Interview, Dennis J. McCarthy.

[3] Represented by John P. Doyle, secretary. Through the efforts of President Walker, a representative of farm organizations was brought into co-operation with organized labor on legislative matters in this session.—*Proc.* (1915), pp. 229 f.

tion, Chicago Teachers' Association, Women's Trade Union League, International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers, International Journeymen Horseshoers' Union, and the Electrical Workers.[1]

Some of these organizations were affiliated with the State Federation of Labor directly; others, notably the railway brotherhoods, were not, and the Joint Board afforded the means for practical co-operation with them. The Illinois State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen suggested in 1916 that the Grand Lodges of the four brotherhoods "work out some plan" whereby the lodges in Illinois might affiliate with the State Federation of Labor;[2] but nothing came of it. Even though the brotherhoods are outside the American Federation of Labor and therefore ineligible for direct membership, they have continued to be represented in State Federation conventions by the device of "fraternal delegates." In at least one year the State Federation of Labor has formally indorsed the legislative program of one of the railway organizations.[3] Similar means of co-operation have been employed with other unaffiliated groups, such as the Illinois State Teachers' Association.

In 1915 the members of the Joint Board also decided that in order to get anything in the way of legislative results the lobbying work must be connected up with intelligent political activity, and to this end they believed that the Joint Board should be continued permanently, not merely during sessions. If possible, they suggested, six active workers should be kept in the field in order to organize each senatorial district; the recommendation was that one each

[1] *Report of Joint Board* (1915), p. 22; "Report of President Walker," *Proc.* (1915), p. 49.

[2] *WN*, October 14, 1916, p. 2.

[3] *Proc.* (1916), p. 231.

should come from the State Federation of Labor, the Railway Brotherhoods, the Chicago movement, the Women's organizations, the Illinois Mine Workers, and the farmers' organizations.[1] This idea was laid before the executive boards of the different organizations concerned, but it did not result in any permanent program. For one thing, war activities intervened, and after the war the Labor party movement held attention for a few years.

In February, 1922, an emergency conference of trade unionists met in Chicago to consider the legislative situation, and one outcome was the reorganization of the Joint Board. Prior to this time the expenses of the board were paid by contributions from each of the organizations participating. This was usually quite small, never exceeding $5.00 or $10.00 a session from each organization. The funds were used for postage and whatever stenographic help was necessary, which was not a great deal, as Secretary McCarthy did most of the typewriting himself. Now, however, it was decided to make the Joint Board a permanent medium for non-partisan political co-operation between sessions as well as during them, and for this purpose all trade unions in the state were urged to subscribe one-third of a cent a member a month for its support. The State Federation sent out an official letter urging such contributions, and the Illinois Mine Workers, the railway brotherhoods, and some local unions responded. The convention of 1923 again called upon affiliated and unaffiliated local unions to help finance the Joint Board.[2] This reorganization of the Joint Board came about partly as an offset to the Labor party by those opposed to independent political action and partly as a result of the constitutional convention, which had caused the board to be kept in

[1] *Report of Joint Board*, (1915), p. 14; *WN*, August 21, 1915.

[2] *Joint Board Minutes*, May 17, 1923; *Proc.* (1923), pp. 476 f.; *WN*, March 25, 1922.

use during the previous two years outside of legislative sessions.

It was soon apparent, however, that the plan of basing the Joint Board directly upon local unions and central bodies would, in effect, set up another state federation of labor and result in a dual movement. So membership on the board was limited to state-wide organizations, though an exception has always been made in favor of the Chicago Federation of Labor, which is the largest city central body in the state.[1]

The Joint Board maintains an office at Springfield the year round, furnishing political information to organized labor in the various districts of the state, and helping to elect friends and defeat enemies in campaigns. The expense of the office is paid by assessments of one-third cent a member a month on each organization.[2] Secretary McCarthy, who manages this office, receives his salary from his own brotherhood (Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen), though now and then the Joint Board pays his traveling expenses. Whenever organizers are needed to promote the board's purposes, as in legislative campaigns, they are sent out by the State Federation, the Illinois Mine Workers, or other member organizations, but not directly by the board itself. It is essentially a co-ordinating device, not an independent controlling body.[3]

It is recognized that the Joint Labor Legislative Board is really the State Federation's legislative board, organized as a separate entity to which the Federation "affiliates" in order

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] The State Federation itself pays nothing directly to the Joint Board, but contributes largely toward the expenses of its work. Until 1923 it paid for printing the board's legislative reports. In that year the board paid out of its own funds, out its treasury was left depleted and the State Federation donated the cost of the printing—$1,200—to the board.—Interview, V. A. Olander.

[3] Interview, V. A. Olander.

to secure the advantage of united political action with organizations which are not in the American Federation of Labor and therefore not in the State Federation. The rules of the board make this plain.[1]

LOBBYING

The legislative work of the State Federation and its allies at Springfield comprises all those innumerable and devious details involved in promoting or blocking bills in an assembly of the small politicians—honest and dishonest, shrewd and stupid, square and tricky—who make up a state legislature. First of all, labor's bills have to be competently drafted to accomplish the objects in mind and at the same time steer clear of the shoals of unconstitutionality in the courts. Sometimes model bills furnished by the American Federation of Labor are introduced, sometimes acts are copied from other states, sometimes bills are drawn up by attorneys for the Federation or its associated unions. Then a member of the House or Senate, or perhaps a member in each house, must be selected to introduce the bill and look after it. There are important points to consider here; legislators have been known to request the honor of handling an important labor bill, only to have it shelved. Next comes the task of securing a hearing on the bill, before a friendly committee if possible; there labor's case has to be presented, and arguments by the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, chambers of commerce, laundry-owners, insurance men, or other opponents have to be met.

After that comes the task of inducing a sufficient number of assemblymen to support the measure. There are conferences with individuals and groups, the labor side of the matter is presented by means of circulars, copies of the *News*

[1] Mimeographed "General Rules, Joint Labor Legislative Board of Illinois," furnished by Secretary McCarthy.

Letter, or special pamphlets; the constituents of recalcitrant members are aroused, bargaining with political groups or blocs of farmers goes on, and perhaps the governor is induced to bring pressure to bear. There are a thousand and one subtleties known to politicians by which a bill may be kept from coming to a vote or be mysteriously sidetracked without any evidence of open opposition at all. The strategy of organized labor must continually be directed toward forcing the issue and bringing roll call votes which will compel the legislators to take an open stand for or against.

In 1915 the State Federation of Labor called an "Emergency Convention" which brought one thousand delegates to Springfield from affiliated and sympathetic organizations on less than six days' notice. This extraordinary course was adopted after a gathering of manufacturers, merchants, and employers of labor, meeting at the call of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, had urged the legislature to reject all bills likely to put any added burden on business, particularly the women's eight-hour bill and the minimum-wage bill. In this time of severe strain, said the business men, with unemployment rampant and many more cases of real want and distress than usual burdening charitable organizations, radical experiments should not be indulged in by the state to further strangle such activity as still exists. The Emergency Convention published abroad the movement on foot to kill all labor bills in the General Assembly, grouped its delegates by senatorial districts and sent them to call on members of the legislature, adopted resolutions, and urged those in attendance to spread the news of the legislative situation throughout the state.[1] This gathering, asserted Federation officials, was all that prevented an adjournment of the legis-

[1] Emergency Convention, *Report of the Proceedings of the First Special Legislative Convention of All Organized Labor of Illinois*, Springfield, Ill., April 27–28, 1915, under auspices of the Illinois State Federation of Labor; also, *WN*, May 1, 1915.

lature before labor's bills had even been considered; it prevented the passage of some obnoxious laws which were enacted in other states, and even brought about some improvement in Illinois laws in spite of the reactionary movement throughout the nation.[1]

ELECTING FRIENDS AND DEFEATING ENEMIES

Arguments count for little with the average legislator in determining his vote on a given bill; or rather, the only argument that really counts is in terms of his political fortunes. Hence, labor's legislative agents at the capitol have to carry with them a promise or a threat that means votes in the home constituency, and the legislator must be made to know that his actions will be watched and either rewarded or punished at election time.

Following each session since 1915 the Joint Board has compiled and published the voting record of each legislator on measures of interest to labor. This information is circulated through the *News Letter*, as well as in the annual reports to the convention, and appears in the following form:

FOURTEENTH DISTRICT—THE COUNTIES OF KANE AND KINDALL

SENATOR

Harold G. Kessinger, Aurora, Publisher, Republican:
Voted for S.B. 155, State Constabulary Bill.....Unfavorable
Voted for S.B. 442, Injunction Limitation Bill.....Favorable

REPRESENTATIVES

Frank A. McCarthy, Elgin, Attorney, Republican:
3-31 Voted for H.B. 28, Injunction Limitation Bill.....Favorable
4-28 Voted for H.B. 28, Injunction Limitation Bill.....Favorable
6-10 Voted for S.B. 442, Injunction Limitation Bill....Favorable
5-5 Voted for H.B. 90, Women's Eight Hour Bill.....Favorable
5-12 Voted for H.B. 90, Women's Eight Hour Bill.....Favorable
6-18 Voted against S.B. 155, State Constabulary Bill...Favorable[2]

[1] *WN*, August 14, 1915.

[2] Taken at random from "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1915), p. 285.

At election time the records of candidates for re-election and favorable or unfavorable recommendations of the Joint Board are made known to trade unionists of the different districts.

Questionnaires are sometimes sent to candidates who have no previous legislative record, and they are asked to state their attitudes on pending legislation. The questionnaire device, however, is not regarded by the Federation as the best means for determining whether or not a candidate is "friendly"; answers on the eve of election are apt to be vague or untrustworthy. It is used only when there are one or two issues of supreme importance; it was used, for example, on the injunction limitation bill and on the constabulary bill. "We must be specific," says Secretary Olander. "If we send out a general question we get a general statement that can be interpreted any way."[1]

Instead of sending questionnaires to the unknown candidates themselves, the more frequent practice of the Joint Board is to inquire of trade-union legislative committees in their districts. Quite often a member of the Joint Board is delegated to "look up" a new aspirant for legislative honors in a particular district; he consults union men who are likely to know of the candidate's friendliness or unfriendliness to organized labor in the past—perhaps as a city councilman or county clerk or in business. Past actions count for more than campaign statements.[2]

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] *Joint Board Minutes, passim*; interview, V. A. Olander. The following questionnaire was sent out prior to the 1928 elections regarding certain unknown candidates. It was handled through the legislative committees of central bodies.

"Senatorial District . . . . etc. Mr.————, Candidate for State———. Business or occupation?———— What are his business or financial connections?———— Has he ever held public office? If so, what office?———— What is his attitude toward organized labor?———— What is his attitude toward an Old Age Pension Bill?———— What is his attitude

Each central body and local union is urged to keep an active legislative committee on the job before elections to co-operate with the state officers and to conduct a local campaign through the trade unions. At State Federation conventions the delegates sometimes meet by senatorial districts to discuss their representatives in the legislature and plan campaigns. The Federation sends literature and sometimes speakers into the districts, furnishes information, and in strategic contests commissions one or more Executive Board members to aid the local forces.

Now and then the Joint Board picks out some particularly obnoxious member of the General Assembly and wages a stiff fight against him when he comes up for re-election. This was done with Senator Turnbaugh, who had sponsored the League for Industrial Rights bills; he was defeated in 1924.[1] Such an incident has a salutary effect upon other members of the legislature; Secretary McCarthy claims that as a result of similar instances legislators are much more anxious than they used to be to get the labor recommendation.[2]

The Federation gives its backing under the non-partisan policy to men who have supported its program in the legis-

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toward Women's Eight Hour Bill?———— What is his attitude on question of employers requiring their employees to enter contracts, whereby they agree not to become a member of a Labor Union?————What is his attitude in regard to health and safety legislation for industrial workers?———— What is his attitude on State Military Police Bill?———— Remarks———— Please sign here———— Street———— City———— Member of————Union."

[1] *Proc.* (1924), p. 435; *Joint Board Minutes*, September 8, 1923.

[2] Organized labor conducted an intensive campaign against Representative Mitchell of Chicago, who had boasted openly that he didn't need the "labor vote." He was re-elected, but by a narrow margin. He came back to Springfield and announced on the floor of the House that he was not going to defy organized labor again. Afterward he was one of the best members of the House from the labor standpoint. The defeat of Turnbaugh and the near defeat of Mitchell strengthened labor's position immensely.—Interview, D. J. McCarthy.

lature, and most members of the General Assembly are glad to carry the recommendation of the Joint Board as part of their political luggage when they return to their districts. It is a generally understood principle of the non-partisan policy that a sitting member of the House or Senate will receive the labor recommendation for re-election if his attitude is reasonably favorable, even though some card-holding trade unionist should try to run against him. This is considered to be only fair; if a member supports labor during the session, labor ought not to desert him in the election.[1]

As a general rule, it may be set down that an organization like the State Federation of Labor is much more effective as an opponent than as a friend, because it is easier in politics to persuade citizens to vote against a candidate you do not want than to vote for one you do want. In other words, "defeat your enemies" is a bigger part of the non-partisan political policy than "elect your friends."[2]

The recommendations of the Joint Board and State Federation generally carry a good deal of weight in the central bodies and local unions of the home districts; but if the local unionists are not satisfied with the Board's reasons they may rebel. The state labor body does not "control" the labor vote arbitrarily. On one occasion, for example, the Joint Board recommended a certain legislative candidate for re-election in the Kankakee district, but labor in Kankakee turned in and beat him. The legislator's labor record on the whole was bad, and locally he was known as unfriendly to trade unions. In a crucial situation President Walker had promised him the Joint Board recommendation in exchange

[1] Interview, D. J. McCarthy.

[2] Secretary McCarthy agrees that organized labor is much more effective in opposing a man than in getting him elected.—Interview.

for a favorable vote on the women's eight-hour bill; but this did not overcome the hostility to him at home.[1]

The State Federation acts as one agency through which the findings of the American Federation of Labor on national candidates, including Illinois congressmen, are circulated. When the American Federation of Labor has no advice to offer on Congressional nominees, as in the case of new candidates with no national record, the State Federation determines which way the support of labor should go. In 1924 it vigorously supported LaFollette for the presidency, along with the American Federation of Labor, and also worked for Newton Jenkins, Progressive candidate for the Republican senatorial nomination. On this occasion the Joint Board contributed $300 to the Jenkins campaign fund; this is the only instance in which it has made a campaign contribution, though it often sends out literature in its own name.[2] When Charles G. Dawes, of Illinois, ran for the vice-presidency, the Illinois State Federation of Labor appointed a special committee to broadcast his record of opposition to organized labor.[3]

Frequently the State Federation is asked to indorse some candidate for local or county office, but it answers that it is dangerous for the state organization to inject itself into local politics:

> The State Federation has for its primary duty the subject of state legislation, while the American Federation of Labor devotes its attention to national legislation. We believe, therefore, that as affecting candidates for city or county officers, endorsement, when deemed advisable, should be made only by the central body or central bodies and local unions in the city, township and county affected; that the Illinois State Federation of Labor should be called upon for advice as affecting candidates for the

[1] Interview, C. A. Bernier, secretary of Kankakee Federation of Labor.

[2] *Joint Board Minutes*, February 7, 1924; interview, D. J. McCarthy.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 282, 294–98.

state legislature and other state governmental offices and that the advice of the American Federation of Labor should be sought and followed regarding candidates for Congress and other national political positions.[1]

POLITICAL ALLIANCES

In the gubernatorial campaign of 1916 the State Federation of Labor issued a statement which set forth the labor measures passed under Governor Dunne's administration and urged his re-election. Lowden, the rival candidate, was bitterly attacked on the basis of his connection with the Pullman Company.[2] Once Lowden was in office, however, it became necessary to work with him, and President Walker, who announced that "possibly the strongest letter I ever wrote in condemnation of a man, I wrote in opposing the election of our present governor," told the Bloomington convention in presenting Governor Lowden for an address that he had found him an "agreeable surprise."[3]

During the next election, that of 1920, the Labor party movement and the "Walker for Governor" campaign were in full swing; so the State Federation opposed both the old-party candidates. Len Small, the Republican nominee, was the successful candidate, and once more the Federation found it advantageous to work with, rather than against, the administration in power.

Governor Small earned the support of organized labor for his 1924 campaign by using his influence in the legislature to defeat the constabulary bill, by favorable use of his appointive power, by his veto of the Cook County "jury-juggling" bill, by pardoning the Chicago flat janitors, but most of all by agreeing to put through an injunction limitation measure. When in a precampaign statement issued from Kankakee in

[1] *WN*, June 23, 1923; *Proc.* (1923), p. 101.

[2] *WN*, October 28, 1916.

[3] *Proc.* (1918), pp. 168–69.

the fall of 1923 Governor Small declared for legislative restriction on the use of injunctions, President Walker immediately referred to this as the most hopeful sign in the fight of labor against the injunction.[1]

Accordingly, the Executive Board recommended Governor Small in the Republican primary in preference to State Senator Essington, who had voted for the constabulary bill and against a number of labor measures. On the Democratic primary ticket the Federation recommended State Senator Kent Kellar, who had also declared against the injunction.[2]

Governor Small received the Republican nomination and Norman L. Jones the Democratic. Thereupon President Walker submitted a number of planks to each candidate, with the suggestion that they be incorporated in the party platform. There was no reply from Jones, and no satisfaction from the Democratic state convention. Governor Small, on the other hand, in a personal conference with Walker expressed deep interest in the proposals; and the Republican state convention, while not accepting any of the labor suggestions for the main body of its platform, did pledge itself to carry out the promises made by Governor Small in his Kankakee pronouncement, which included "the abolition of the use of the injunction in labor disputes," old-age pensions, federal regulation of child labor, initiative and referendum, and other matters of interest to labor.[3]

"Now for the first time in the history of the state," declared the Executive Board of the State Federation, "a major political party has definitely and clearly announced its purpose to remedy the injunction evil. Under such circumstances we would be untrue to the people and the cause of labor which we represent if we did not urge the re-election of

[1] See *Proc.* (1923), p. 478.

[2] *WN*, March 22, 1924.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 188–92.

Governor Small."[1] At the same time, the Federation recommended 43 Republicans and 63 Democrats in the legislative contests.[2]

The injunction limitation bill was forced through the next session of the General Assembly and the constabulary proposal was killed. This success would have been impossible, said the Joint Board, without the

whole-hearted backing and support of the Governor of the state and many members of his cabinet, especially Frank L. Smith, chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission. These men supported our Injunction Limitation Bill as whole-heartedly as did the representatives of labor themselves. They just as whole-heartedly opposed the Military Police Bill and their action on these matters was typical of their attitude on nearly all other labor matters, pro and con.[3]

The convention of 1925 adopted a formal resolution of thanks to Small and Smith for their part in the achievements of this "victory year."[4]

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 303–6. The convention unanimously indorsed this stand.

[2] *Proc.* (1925), p. 273.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), p. 272. At the same time, the Federation was careful to point out that notwithstanding the fact that the campaign pledges of Governor Small had been indorsed by the Republican party, only 17 of the 37 Republicans in the Senate and only 37 of the 94 Republicans in the House voted for the injunction limitation bill. At the same time, though Mr. Brennan and Mr Jones, leaders in the Democratic party, had refused to have injunction limitation incorporated in their platform, 11 of the 14 Democratic senators and 42 of the 58 Democratic representatives voted for the bill. This was seen as a vindication of the policy of "sticking to principles and dealing with each individual candidate for office on his own merits."

This statement was also made in order to satisfy the Democrats that the Federation was giving them proper credit for their support of the injunction limitation bill. Some of them complained that all the glory was going to Governor Small, and at the next session there was a disposition on the part of Chicago Democrats in the House to say of a labor bill, "Let Small pass it; he is supposed to have ninety votes here, and he gets the credit." To meet this situation the Federation circulated its statement of two years before among the Democrats, being careful not to alienate the Republicans in the process.—Interview, V. A. Olander.

[4] *Proc.* (1925), p. 117. The governor was praised throughout the convention for this and other indications of his sympathy with organized labor.—*Ibid.*, pp. 3, 7, 65, 49, 52, 75.

Accordingly, when Frank L. Smith and Senator McCormick engaged in the now famous senatorial primary of 1926, the State Federation of Labor worked enthusiastically for Smith. A full-page spread in the *News Letter* of March 13 indorsed his candidacy; a week later there was a special edition of the *News Letter* devoted to a declaration of the Joint Board in his favor, and the message that "there never was a time in the State of Illinois and never an issue upon which labor could be so certain as of this" was sent throughout the State. Smith's nomination was hailed as "a vindication of the non-partisan political policy of the American Federation of Labor.[1]

Then an investigating committee of the United States Senate uncovered the fact that Frank L. Smith, while chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, had received huge campaign contributions from Samuel Insull, public utilities magnate whose industries the commission was supposed to regulate.

Opposed to Smith in the coming election was the Democratic boss, Brennan, running on an antiprohibition platform. There were rumors that his partisans would attempt to secure the indorsement of the Streator (1926) convention of the State Federation for him. In this situation leaders of the Federation exerted themselves to prevent a threatened dissension, and the question was averted by the Committee on Officers' Reports, which brought in a six-point statement of the policy of non-partisan political action, of which the sixth point provided

That at this time no recommendations except as to state and local officers, other than an analysis of the positions taken by the various candidates for office be considered by the Federation and no specific indorsements for

[1] *WN*, March 13, March 20, April 17, 1928.

any candidate or group of candidates be made at this convention other than as above expressed.

This was adopted.[1]

Frank L. Smith was successful in the senatorial election, but the United States Senate at Washington barred him from membership on account of the campaign fund exposure. Two years later (1928) he again sought the Republican nomination as a candidate for United States senator from Illinois; and his opponent in the primaries was Otis F. Glenn, who as a state senator had been among the leading supporters of the constabulary bill, had voted against the women's eight-hour bill, the old-age pension bill, and had been particularly outspoken in his opposition to organized labor. The disposition of the Joint Board was to favor Smith, but Secretary Olander insisted that in view of the nationally known scandal aroused by his previous campaign such action would be misconstrued, particularly by trade unionists outside of the state, who would wonder at the company the

[1] Communist delegates took advantage of the situation to introduce a resolution criticizing "the official leaders of labor generally in this state," who "have and are giving support to Smith . . . . who is the nominee of the Small machine . . . . and receives the active financial support of the public utilities magnates and other large employers of Illinois." They wanted a Labor party, since "both parties are under the complete domination of the bankers, public utility corporations, etc."—*Proc.* (1926), p. 161.

Painters' Local No. 273, Chicago, sponsored another resolution, which declared that "the Illinois State Federation of Labor has spent considerable time and money in promoting a certain candidate for a political office," who "also accepted large sums . . . . from interests notoriously inimical to the welfare of labor organizations." While "recognizing the legislative work done in behalf of labor by the candidate," the local said that it did not believe in "endorsing a man who is trying to serve two masters"; and it suggested that the Federation refrain in the future from engaging in any "partisanship political campaign" and "confine its recommendation of candidates . . . . to its published report on labor legislation as it has in the past." Secretary Wright of the committee reported that this had already been covered in the adoption of the earlier declaration, and that "we have refrained from taking part in any political campaign or endorsing any candidate, and decided to confine ourselves to published reports."—*Proc.* (1926), pp. 162–63.

Illinois State Federation of Labor was keeping. So he wrote a compromise resolution, which the board adopted. This simply stated the facts about Smith's record, setting forth his friendliness to labor measures, but not glossing over the unpleasant details which had brought him into disrepute. Then it stated Glenn's record in the state Senate, and concluded by recommending the defeat of Glenn, without directly indorsing Smith or defending his actions. In order that trade unionists of the nation might "understand the problem with which Illinois trade unionists are confronted" copies of the resolution were sent to American Federation of Labor officers and to officers of all international unions, as well as to affiliated locals.[1] Democratic voters were urged to support A. J. Cermak in the primary.

Governor Small had continued his co-operation with organized labor in legislative and administrative matters;[2] so in 1928 the State Federation of Labor actively favored him for re-nomination. Three hundred thousand extra copies of the *News Letter* of March 10, 1928, indorsing his candidacy were printed and circulated by the Small organization.[3]

The smashing defeat dealt to the Small-Smith state ticket, which had allied itself in Cook County with the "America First" organization of Mayor Thompson and

[1] *WN*, March 10, 1928; interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] In the 1927 legislature, for example, he assisted actively in passing the Wage Guaranty Law, sending his workers onto the floor of the House to work for it when there seemed to be little chance to put it through. He was helpful to labor's program in many ways. He did not require support of administration measures by labor in return, but only support in election campaigns, though Walker now and then might have seen labor people in the legislature and secured their help to the governor in some way. The State Federation of Labor exerted its official efforts only on behalf of labor measures. It supported the administration bills on primary and judicial elections, but these were on the Federation's own program also.—Interview, V. A. Olander.

[3] Interview, V. A. Olander.

State's Attorney Crowe, is a matter of recent history. In the November elections the State Federation of Labor recommended Anton J. Cermak, the Democratic candidate, for the United States Senate and made no recommendation for the governorship.

The Illinois State Federation of Labor has come in for considerable criticism, particularly from outsiders who sympathize with its efforts for labor legislation, because of its long alliance with the Small organization. Those who take this point of view hold that good labor statesmanship cannot afford to ally itself with an old-party political machine, even though there be temporary gains.[1] Some of the Federation leaders are inclined to admit that having gone to the one extreme by promoting the Labor party movement it may have swung to the other extreme and carried the policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies" in the old parties a little too far. Others point to the undeniably friendly attitude of the governor toward organized labor's program, his co-operation against the constabulary bill and for the injunction limitation bill, the consideration given organized labor in the appointment of factory inspectors, and many other administrative favors. If a governor, or a legislator, has been consistently favorable in office, they ask, must we not support him for re-election?

Shall labor take into account anything other than support of its program when it comes time to recommend candi-

[1] The *New Republic* commented editorially on the 1928 Illinois primaries: "Incidentally, the depths of ignominy to which organized labor's non-partisan political policy may plunge it is here illustrated; for the Illinois unions, after endorsing the disgraceful Thompson-Smith outfit because of the unfavorable attitude toward labor of some of its opponents, finds itself overwhelmingly defeated. Trading for favors between two corrupt machines gets labor exactly nowhere."—April 25, 1928.

It is not strictly true that the Illinois Federation indorsed either Thompson or Smith, though it did recommend the defeat of Smith's opponent, and by its work on behalf of Small lined itself up by implication with the whole ticket.

dates—barring, that is, the alternative of a Labor party? The same problem is faced by the Anti-Saloon League, which was also much criticized for the position that its non-partisan policy of elect your friends and defeat your enemies led it to take in the Illinois elections. It continued its indorsement of Frank L. Smith even after the campaign fund disclosures had been made, Federation leaders point out, while the State Federation of Labor did not.[1]

AGREED BILLS

The marked success of the method of commission investigation and joint agreement in securing labor legislation during a previous period in the Federation's history has been noted. Since 1914 this procedure has not been as conspicuous in the work of the Federation as before. Perhaps one reason is that the paramount objective has been, not legislation on health, safety, and comfort, but injunction limitation—a matter of the fighting strength of trade unions, on which the opposing sides are not likely to agree.

In his 1927 report President Walker dwelt at some length on "The Growing Development of Mutual Agreements between Employers and Workers on Legislative Matters." He called attention to the fact that during the last session of the General Assembly

there were four bills that were the result of conferences and agreements on the part of the employers and the organized workers. Those bills were: The agreed amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Law; the Barbers' Qualification Law; the Electrical Workers' Code and Qualification Law, and two bills agreed to between the Mine Workers and the Coal Operators. The Master Horseshoers and Journeymen Horseshoers

[1] With reference to the Federation's influence on honesty in politics, Secretary McCarthy of the Joint Board says, "When a group that has been enthusiastic for you previously comes out and denounces your opponent, who has been particularly opposed to them, but at the same time refuses to approve of you, wouldn't it have some effect?"

also appeared in the legislature working on the basis of a joint agreement against a bill which was defeated.

President Walker also points to the work of the Mines Investigation Commission created in 1910. Since that time, "all mining legislation enacted in the state of Illinois has been agreed legislation between the miners and the coal operators and disinterested representatives." "The law providing for Free Employment Offices in this state was also the result of an agreement reached in a conference between representatives of labor, employers and disinterested technical experts." He continues:

> These joint actions are an indication of a better spirit developing in industry. . . . . When such an agreement is reached, the legislature is usually glad to ratify it by legal enactment, and both sides usually have the highest regard for each other. Legislation reached by this process is beneficial not only to the workers and the employers, but to the public as well. Those who perhaps derive the greatest benefit from it are the legislators who are saved the worry and work of investigating a subject with which they are unfamiliar, and reaching a conclusion as between conflicting presentations of it from the two interested sides. It is my opinion that this method of solving legislative questions will be adopted more and more as time goes on.[1]

[1] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 182–84. See Beckner's discussion, *History of Illinois Labor Legislation*, in which he praises the method of joint agreement highly.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CONSTITUTION OF ILLINOIS

Well-informed citizens of diverse political creeds were willing to admit by 1914 that the old constitutional machinery was creaking badly. The revenue sections in particular were out of date, for the industrial development of Illinois had accumulated vast properties in forms undreamt of in the philosophies of 1870. It had proved practically impossible to change the old instrument by amendment, since the fathers in their wisdom had laid down the rules that the General Assembly might propose amendments to only one article at a time, and to the same article no more often than once in four years, and that an amendment to be ratified must receive not merely a majority of the votes cast on that subject but a majority of all votes cast in a general election.

In the General Assembly of 1915 there were three joint resolutions for constitutional changes promoted by the labor lobby. The first was the initiative and referendum; it was favored most strongly, and had it gone through the others would have been dropped. When it was defeated, labor endeavored to secure a constitutional convention, because that seemed to offer as quick a way of getting the initiative and referendum as waiting until it could be put through the legislature and voted upon by the people. In addition, a constitutional convention, as President Walker said, would offer "the advantage of an opportunity to make what other changes in the constitution we believe are necessary to enable progressive measures to be made into law." Failing in this effort also, the next attempt was to push through an "amending amendment" which provided that three amendments

to the constitution might be submitted at one time. But "the reactionary forces and the tools of the interests" were able to prevent even this degree of success. The General Assembly passed instead a proposal which labor immediately dubbed "the tax-dodgers' amendment." This alteration of the revenue section was much less acceptable to labor than previous tax amendments which had been before the people, and the State Federation with its allied organizations opposed it at the polls.[1]

Now President Walker recommended, and the State Federation adopted, the policy of working for a constitutional convention to accomplish the objects labor had been seeking. Matthew Woll rose in the convention to point out, prophetically, that "a constitutional convention will not always accomplish that which labor wants." He called attention to New York, where the trade unions had recently advocated a constitutional convention in the hope that the constitution might be altered in such a way that labor and social legislation could be sustained. The convention was held, but it had proved to be "nothing more than a convention of the interests, and the interests have succeeded in so amending the constitution in that convention that the labor movement of the State of New York is now compelled to go before the people and ask them to repudiate the work of that constitutional convention."[2] Chairman Connors of the Committee on Officers' Reports explained that his committee

[1] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 67, 217–19. This tax amendment, like many other proposals, received the overwhelming approval of the citizens who voted on it, but failed of adoption because it did not receive a majority of all votes cast at the election.—*WN*, October 18, 1919.

[2] Nevertheless, Mr. Woll said he concurred in the policy adopted by the Illinois Federation, with that warning.—*Proc.* (1915), p. 215. The Executive Board was divided as to whether a constitutional convention ought to be called or not; Secretary Olander was opposed to it, but President Walker and most of the board decided to favor a convention.—Interview, V. A. Olander.

had taken these things into account but said, "We believe the only hope we have is through the medium of a constitutional convention." As for the New York situation, "labor in that state is probably as much at fault as anybody else. They should have had their representation the same as the employer did. . . . ."

The General Assembly of 1917 submitted the question of a constitutional convention to the voters at the next regular election. "If this convention is held," said the Joint Board's report, it "will be of much greater importance to the State of Illinois than any general assembly of the Legislature. . . . . Organized labor should begin at once to lay plans for the election of proper delegates."[1]

The new constitution must be drawn in such a way, declared President Walker when it had become certain that the convention was to be held, as to leave no doubt of the constitutionality of an improved workmen's compensation law, child labor prohibitions, and women's hour laws; it must guarantee the rights of free speech, free press, and peaceful assemblage, and particularly the rights of workers to act with their associates, lawfully and peacefully, to protect and promote their interests. "The new constitution must leave no foundation upon which judge or bench-made law may be erected in the future."[2]

The Bloomington convention recommended that every trade union set aside a stated period at each meeting for consideration of matters relating to the choosing of constitutional convention delegates. Officers of the State Federation would meet frequently and make the state organization a clearing-house for ideas and measures designed to protect the workers and further their interests in the convention.

[1] *Proc.* (1917), p. 86.

[2] *Proc.* (1918), pp. 71–72.

"Remember, organized labor *must* have representation in the Constitutional Convention."[1]

Just at this time the State Federation was embarking on its independent political movement, and preparations for the election of delegates were handled through the Labor party. The Executive Board of the Illinois State Federation and the Executive Committee of the Illinois Labor party, in joint session with the Executive Board of the Chicago Federation and the Executive Committee of the Cook County Labor party, issued an "Address to the Public" early in July, 1919, announcing the program upon which Labor party candidates would run in the November election. A constitutional convention, this manifesto declared, is especially important

> at this time of world commotions and impending social change. Shall the new constitution leave the people of the state free to meet the social crisis and solve the great problems of the time in their own way? Or shall dominant economic groups, dreading the inevitable reorganization of industry, seek, in their own interest, to perpetuate constitutional obstructions to freedom? The only safety is in freedom. Obstructions to popular government are provocations to violence.

Labor candidates would seek to imbed in the constitution of the state a "gateway amending clause" whereby a petition of 50,000 electors at large might cause an amendment to be placed upon the ballot at any regular election, trial by jury in injunction cases, judicial invalidation of legislative acts only by an unanimous court, home rule for cities, taxation of swollen fortunes, the initiative, referendum, and recall, woman's suffrage, old-age pensions, provisions whereby the state might make home and farm loans, and provision for compensation to world war veterans.[2]

[1] *Proc.* (1918), p. 232.

[2] *WN*, July 5, 1919. An analysis of the constitution of Illinois by Victor A. Olander, published in the *News Letter* of October 18, 1919, touches on other points. He quotes the American Federation of Labor proposal for inclusion in a state bill

A campaign committee was detailed to work for the adoption of these principles; they were empowered to change the program if necessary. The members were John Fitzpatrick, William E. Rodriguez, Agnes Nestor, L. J. Salch, T. R. Downie, H. C. Maddox, and M. R. Cunningham. Everyone agreed that a vigorous campaign must be conducted, and that the co-operation of the farmers of the state must be secured, so far as possible.[1]

Mr. Herbert S. Bigelow, who as chairman of the Ohio Constitutional Convention had helped to draft a modern and liberal law for that commonwealth, was employed jointly by the Illinois and Cook County Labor parties to assist in the campaign and to give expert advice. He toured the state, speaking at public meetings and discussing constitutional issues with local unions and Labor party organizations. Frequent contributions from his pen appeared in the *Weekly News Letter*[2] and in labor papers.

At the annual convention of the State Federation held in Peoria Mr. Bigelow addressed the delegates and informed them that the Labor party had nominated candidates for

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of rights, a provision which would prevent equity courts from enjoining the exercise of free speech, free assemblage, or freedom of the press, and also the American Federation of Labor proposals for abolishing the common law defenses in employers' liability cases by constitutional provision, for regulating the sale of convict-labor products, and for the eight-hour day on state work. He also suggests that the article regulating corporations ought to be considered, for its specific provisions regarding voting powers proportional to shares of stock owned had interfered with the enactment of the kind of co-operative law that was desired. The requirement of a majority of all members elected for passing bills in the General Assembly also needed attention. Mr. Olander was not enthusiastic about the proposal that legislative enactments should be invalidated in the courts only by unanimous decision; he saw in it a double-edged sword, for "legislatures have frequently passed very dangerous laws which the people desire to have declared unconstitutional," and under the proposed plan one unfair judge could prevent a bad law from being declared void.

[1] *WN*, July 5, 1919.

[2] *WN*, August 23, September 13, September 18, October 11, etc.

the Constitutional Convention in about two-thirds of the districts of the state. In addition, the voters would have the opportunity of instructing their delegates on three issues which had been placed on the ballot under the Public Policy Law. These were (1) enabling provisions to allow cities to control their own borrowing operations, and to establish public ownership of any utility; (2) the initiative and referendum; and (3) the "gateway amendment." The Federation gave its support to all three propositions. The hope was to persuade the constitutional convention to submit these three subjects separately from the rest of the new constitution, so that should the new draft as a whole be defeated (and many people predicted that any constitution the convention might draw would be voted down at the polls) there still might be something gained in the way of amendments to the existing constitution.[1]

On the recommendation of President McDonald, the Federation created a special committee to aid in the campaign in each senatorial district. The Labor party advised workers to stay away from the polls on primary day in order that they might help the Labor candidates, who had to go on the ballot by petition.[2] Between 35 and 40 nominees of the Labor party were placed in the field in twenty-five districts, of which fourteen districts were in Chicago and eleven downstate.[3] Party leaders hoped that with the light vote which was expected enough union men might be persuaded to go to the polls to elect a substantial part of their ticket.

In spite of the various declarations about the great importance of electing favorable delegates to the Constitu-

[1] *Proc.* (1919), p. 333.

[2] *Proc.* (1919), p. 46.

[3] *New Majority*, November 1, 1919. At the last moment five of the candidates in Chicago were taken off the ballot by court proceedings directed against the legality of their petitions; Labor party members were advised to write their names in.

tional Convention, as the November election approached the interest of the labor movement was centered on other things. Even the *New Majority*, official organ of the Cook County Labor party, paid scant attention to the election; its headlines were for the great steel strike, the actors' strike, the miners' strike, and the stock-yards strike. Not a single Labor party candidate was victorious. The Constitutional Convention assembled in Springfield on January 6, 1920, with 102 delegates in attendance, of whom 85 had been elected as Republicans and 17 as Democrats.[1]

Having met defeat in its preconvention campaign, organized labor had to revamp its proposals and prepare to get what it could, or at least to prevent what reverses it could, at the hands of the constitution makers. From the start the State Federation leaders feared the worst.[2]

On January 19 a conference to consider constitutional questions was held in Chicago, attended by President McDonald, Assistant-Secretary Towers, of the State Federation, Irvine Strain, of the Illinois Mine Workers, Dennis J. McCarthy, of the Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, President Fitzpatrick and Secretary Nockels, of the Chicago Federation, Angus W. Kerr, chief counsel for the Illinois Mine Workers, and Secretary Olander. Secretary Olander and Attorney Kerr, who had previously conferred on the

[1] *WN*, January 10, 1920.

[2] "Fear is expressed in some labor quarters," said the *News Letter*, "that 'Big Business' is in control of the convention and that if the common people of the state, and especially the laboring people, are not alert and watchful of the interests of common humanity, those in control will write a constitution that will so thoroughly throttle the people as to leave them helpless in the way of making real progress.

"Again it is said that the people can defeat the constitution if it is written for 'Big Business.' But if efforts to defeat it become necessary, the common people must carefully watch what is being done at Springfield so as to detect all motives for a Constitution that may deprive us of the rights, that have been our American ideals."—*WN*, January 10, 1920.

subject, submitted a tentative draft of a labor article for the constitution which met with the unanimous approval of the conference. Thereafter arrangements were made for a joint session of the State Federation Executive Board with representatives of the mine-workers and the railroad brotherhoods, and the proposal was indorsed, as follows:

LABOR

SECTION 1. The labor of a human being is an attribute of life and is not property.

SECTION 2. The right of workmen to organize into trade and labor unions and to deal and speak through representatives chosen by themselves shall not be abridged.

SECTION 3. No court, tribunal, judge nor any officer or official shall by any process, order, injunction, restraining order, decree or proclamation abridge the right of any workman to quit any employment either singly or in concert, nor the right of by peaceful persuasion, picketing, assemblage or the payment of strike benefits inducing others so to quit or to refrain from working, nor shall any such acts be made or held to be unlawful, or to constitute an unlawful conspiracy. Nor shall any such process, order, injunction, restraining order, decree or proclamation interfere with the exercise of the legitimate (normal[1]) functions of any organization formed for the purpose of advancing the interests of those who labor.[2]

The proposed article, said Secretary Olander,

is designed to give constitutional sanction to the normal activities of the trade-union movement; to prevent improper use of injunctions during labor disputes; to protect the workers against inclusion in so-called anti-trust laws and to safeguard them against the passage of compulsory arbitration laws, anti-strike and anti-picketing laws and other measures framed to restrict or deny their normal rights.[3]

"Labor's Proposal" was introduced into the Constitutional Convention on February 26 by William J. Sneed, the

[1] The word "normal" was later substituted for "legitimate" on the advice of Samuel Gompers.

[2] *WN*, February 7, 1920.

[3] *WN*, May 20, 1922.

only trade unionist in the body, and became known as Proposal No. 232.

On April 7, at a hearing before the Constitutional Convention sitting as committee of the whole, some of the best informed trade-union leaders of the country on organized labor's legal status assisted the Illinois State Federation of Labor in presenting its case. The hearing began in the morning with a carefully prepared statement by Attorney Kerr and closed at 1 A.M. after a speech by John H. Walker. Matthew Woll, representing the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, Andrew Furuseth, of San Francisco, president of the International Seamen's Union of America, and John P. Frey, of Ohio, editor of the *Molders' Journal* and author of *The Labor Injunction*, spoke in the order named. George W. Perkins, of Chicago, president of the Cigarmakers' International Union, and John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, were both prepared to present arguments, but the questions put to other speakers consumed more time than had been expected, and they left for Chicago shortly after midnight. The speeches were afterward printed and sent to all labor organizations in the state by the Illinois Federation.[1]

Further hearings were later held before the Committee on Industrial Affairs and Labor, at which Charles M. Piez, representing the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, and Dudley Taylor, representing the Associated Employers, appeared in opposition to the labor proposal. On April 28 and May 12 Secretary Olander presented additional statements on behalf of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

The Convention recessed during the summer months until September 21, when it met for one day and adjourned until after the presidential election. Then on December 9 it

[1] *WN*, April 10, 1920; *Proc.* (1920), p. 11.

adjourned again to reconvene on September 6, 1921. While the constitution makers waited, industrial depression weakened the power of labor, the heavily financed open-shop campaign of employers, and the propaganda of such organizations as the League for Industrial Rights beat upon public opinion to turn it against trade unions, and the political reaction of the era of "normalcy" deepened.

Meanwhile, the annual convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor declared that labor's article, still in committee, was "the most important legislative proposal ever presented on behalf of labor in this state." The Labor party of Illinois wrote the article into its platform as Plank 1.[1]

In addition to this "most vital labor measure in the Constitutional Convention," the State Federation had a defensive battle to wage before that assembly. No less than six proposals involving the limitation of the right to strike or some form of compulsory arbitration were introduced,[2] and part of the efforts of the labor speakers in the April hearings had been directed against these attacks. Governor Allen, of Kansas, appeared before the convention to advocate his Industrial Court plan. Then there were the proposals for a state constabulary, which labor bitterly opposed, and the shaping of the judicial system had to be watched with care.[3]

September, 1921, arrived and the Constitutional Convention came together once more. It remained in session for about an hour and adjourned to reconvene in January, 1922.

By this time it was plainly apparent, said President Walker, that "the reactionary forces in Illinois" dominated

[1] *Proc.* (1920), pp. 8, 12.

[2] H. B. Sell, *The American Federation of Labor and the Labor Party Movement*, p. 62, quoting John Fitch, *Survey*, April 3, 1920.

[3] The State Federation, through its Committee on Schools and through its Executive Board, also indorsed the program drawn up by teachers' organizations on constitutional issues related to taxation and education.—*WN*, March 20, 1920.

the convention. But they seemed to realize that if their report were to ignore labor's demands entirely or make inroads on the rights of the people guaranteed by the existing constitution it would be rejected when submitted for ratification by a referendum vote. "On this account, they have been jockeying for time in the hope that circumstances may develop which might enable them to put over their program. . . . ." He was of the opinion that the convention would go as far as it felt it could and still have its work ratified in its effort to put over an antilabor program. "Just what that limit is" seemed to be the factor greatly exercising the representatives of the big interests in that body, and "just as soon as they can agree upon that matter, I am satisfied that the convention will reconvene, adopt their program and submit it to the people." Organized labor must be alive to the situation, prepared to analyze the proposals fully and to circulate information quickly, so that if necessary the new constitution might be defeated. Delegates to the State Federation convention were urged to return home and set up local organizations prepared to do the job.[1]

When the Constitutional Convention got down to business in January, 1922, organized labor joined in opposing various plans of representation which would have reduced the influence of industrial districts, and especially of Chicago, in the state legislature. There could be no compromise on the principle of representation according to numbers; Secretary Olander resigned from a Citizens' Committee formed to fight such proposals when the committee showed a disposition to make concessions. An emergency conference of trade-union leaders of the state, meeting in Chicago on February 10–11, warned against this "pernicious tendency" to make the vote of a citizen in one part of the state worth more than that of a citizen in another. It also protested against certain enlarge-

[1] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 63–65, 310.

ments of judicial power being considered by the convention, and once more urged the adoption of "Labor's Proposal."

Labor has been preyed upon by venal legislators and venal judges. It has been oppressed by the military-executive arm of the government. Labor is more entitled, because it is more sacred, than property or property rights, to be protected against improper invasion from either the legislative, judicial or executive branch.[1]

When Proposal No. 232, labor's article, came before the convention it was reported favorably by a majority of the Committee on Industrial Affairs and Labor, but the Committee of the Whole discussed it and recommended that it should not pass. This unfavorable report was voted down, 30 to 36, and the article went back to committee. Thereupon, a substitute offered by Amos C. Miller was reported back:

SECTION 1. No law shall be passed denying the right of workmen to organize into trade and labor unions and to deal and speak through representatives chosen by themselves.

The Joint Labor Legislative Board, called into hurried session by President Walker, decided to support the Miller substitute, with the understanding that nothing less would be accepted.[2] The proposal met defeat when the convention adopted a hostile amendment by Delegate Hamill and then refused, 20 to 39, to adopt the article as amended. When it was pointed out that there had never been a direct vote on the Miller substitute, Delegate Hamill agreed to a reconsideration, and the substitute proposal then received 18 affirmative votes.[3]

While the Constitutional Convention finished its task, Secretary Olander, at the wish of the Joint Board, undertook the responsibility for a careful and thoroughgoing

[1] *WN*, February 18, 1922.

[2] Secretary Olander opposed the decision to compromise.—Interview.

[3] *WN*, July 1, July 8, 1922.

analysis of its work. In June, 1922, he started an intensive study of the proposed new constitution, comparing it with the old constitution section by section, and he carried on this work until the State Federation convention met in September. He advised with members of the Joint Board, with Attorney Kerr, and with Attorney Holly for the Women's Trade Union League. Deciding that the new draft was dangerous, he engaged in public debates with several prominent opponents to see whether or not his conclusions would hold up under fire, and his convictions remained unshaken. The newspapers began to pay some attention to his arguments.[1]

The Rockford convention of September, 1922, left the report of its Special Committee on the Proposed Constitution until the next to the last day; but when it heard the statement prepared by Secretary Olander it was roused immediately. The following morning it voted an emergency assessment of 25 cents a member upon all affiliated unions, though it had to strike out a 5-cent assessment limit in its own constitution to do so. This was "one of the most outrageous assessments ever levied by a state federation of labor," says Mr. Olander; but the delegates felt as George W. Briggs of the teamsters argued when he introduced the motion: "If we do not defeat this constitution we will spend $25.00 a man in the next four years trying to get a better constitution. This proposed new constitution is the rottenest document that was ever conceived."[2]

What was the nature of this draft constitution that made it so obnoxious to organized labor? In the first place, it contained none of the progressive features that had been hoped for. Not only labor's anti-injunction proposal had

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander; "President's Report," *Proc.* (1922), p. 153.

[2] *Proc.* (1922), p. 441.

been defeated, but the initiative and referendum, which the people had voted for three times in the past by overwhelming majorities,[1] was ignored. The amending clause, though liberalized to the extent of permitting amendments to two articles at a time, included nothing like the "Gateway Amendment" desired by labor. Likewise, satisfactory clauses to facilitate public ownership of utilities were not to be found in the document, though Chicago was enabled to take over its transportation system.[2]

But even more decisive than the omission of these reforms which labor had sought were the positive provisions of the new proposal. "The members of the judiciary department will be made the sovereign rulers of the people of Illinois if the proposed new constitution is ratified"; this was the point that fired the minds of trade unionists engaged in the struggle with the "injunction judge." The nine judges on the Supreme Bench (rather than the legislature, as heretofore) were given power to determine rules of pleading, practice, and procedure before all the courts of the state. The Supreme Court might make declaratory judgments in cases in which no consequential relief was sought, and in this way issue binding declarations. "No more cunning scheme to enable the predatory interests of the state to shackle the people could be devised." Furthermore, the basis for a judicially controlled political machine was seen in the large appointive powers given to the Supreme Court and the Circuit Court judges of Cook County, together with the provision that the Supreme Court would appoint appellate judges and likewise fill vacancies in the Circuit Court. "The

[1] Under the Public Policy Law.

[2] For these objections of labor, see *WN*, October–December, 1922, *passim*, and special report in *Proc.* (1922), pp. 385–93; also campaign literature issued by the State Federation of Labor and allied organizations, particularly the teachers.—From files in Secretary Olander's office.

grant of power proposed for the judges of the state is far greater than ever suggested in any other American state and even greater than any judicial power exercised in any country in the world since the middle ages."

The revenue provisions of the new document, organized labor held, were "plainly . . . . drafted for the purpose of safeguarding large incomes from taxation." Exemptions from income taxes were arbitrarily fixed, $1,000 plus $200 for each child under sixteen being all that might be exempted in the case of the head of a family; for other persons the exemption was limited to $500. "Thus, no law providing for the taxing of huge incomes of great mercantile corporations would be constitutional unless that law also provides for a tax on the income of the $12 a week sales girls." Furthermore, a steeply graduated income tax was prohibited by a provision that the highest rate must not be more than three times the lowest. A provision under the guise of encouraging forestry was said by labor to open the way for owners of coal lands and speculators to escape taxation merely by planting a few trees.

Unequal representation in the legislature for Cook County and certain new methods of apportionment were held to operate against wage-earners in industrial centers. A section which prohibited the state from assuming any liability for the banking business was a blow at the movement for a depositors' guaranty law. The right to bail was limited and made subject to the discretion of the judge. A request of the colored people of the state for a guaranty of equality had been manipulated into a provision for "equal application of the laws," which Secretary Olander considered might endanger the Women's Ten-Hour Law and perhaps even more general labor legislation. Certain sections of the old constitution prohibiting the sale of public waterways, establishing the power of eminent domain over railroads and other

corporations, and forbidding the creation of fictitious values in stocks had been omitted. The legislative power was limited in such a way as probably to make an old-age pension law unconstitutional; the Chicago teachers asserted that their pension law and pensions for all state employees were imperiled; and the fate of a state insurance fund for workmen's compensation would be doubtful.

This is enough to indicate the basis of organized labor's alarm. It is no wonder that at the conclusion of Secretary Olander's report on the dangers of the proposed constitution (and President Walker remarked that it had twice as many vicious provisions as were uncovered even in that five-thousand-word analysis) the delegates were ready to vote a 25-cent assessment. Some of them remarked that 25 cents a member was cheap, for if the proposed constitution with its judiciary provisions went through, trade unions would have to spend most of their funds keeping their business agents out of jail. Delegate Stacey, of Peoria, wanted to know if the trade-union movement could not provide that not a wheel would turn in Illinois on December 12 until the votes were counted, and President Walker replied that the miners had already arranged for a holiday. Every one of them would be home and voting. Delegate Downie, Galesburg, pledged the local labor paper and the printing plant for every minute till the 12th of December in a campaign to defeat the proposed constitution. Delegate Carlson was for printing a "Vote No" banner and hanging it on every barn, house, and automobile; Delegate Trace, Brick Workers, suggested that all the locals arrange for space in the international union journals; Delegate Cann, of the Typographical Union, pointed out that every union had some white space on its financial reports, and that ought to be used in the campaign. The Street Railway Employees, said Delegate Engstrom, had already had 10,000 postal cards prepared to be sent out

early in December, and Delegate Daniels announced that as recording secretary of his local of 800 members he was going to mail notices to each one the day before election.[1]

The convention was roused, but once it had adjourned the problem was to reach the rank and file of the workers and the general public. Could the Illinois State Federation of Labor persuade enough of the more than one million voters who would go to the polls in December that the proposed constitution was bad? For at the time the Rockford convention came out against the new constitution comparatively little opposition had yet made itself known.

Some weeks later the Executive Board sat in Chicago with discouragement written on their faces. The campaign against the new constitution was not going well; there was not enough money in the treasury, and the outlook was dark. Victor Olander leaned forward dramatically. "Take these shackles off my wrists, ..."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"I am going to discard all committees, special organizations, citizens' committees organized for the purpose, and put the load on the average trade unionist of Illinois, on the secretaries of local unions, these fellows that cannot—some of them—say over a dozen words in a public meeting. I am going to appeal to them."

The Executive Board said, "Go ahead," and placed Secretary Olander in full charge with free rein. He was to order such printed matter as the finances of the Federation would permit, to call upon members of the Executive Board for help when needed, and to manage the campaign as he thought best.[2] His official report says:

[1] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 396–98.

[2] Account of constitutional campaign by V. A. Olander, *Proc.* (1923), p. 332; interview, V. A. Olander; "President's Report," *Proc.* (1923), pp. 94–95.

When authorized to do so by the Executive Board, I dropped all formalities and by mail, telegraph and telephone called upon central bodies and local union officials throughout the state to rally the forces of organized labor against the proposed new state constitution.

President Walker undertook general field work in addition to his office duties. Three members of the Executive Board, Vice-Presidents Towers, Connors and Cross, were assigned to field duty, each to cover a separate division of the state. All other Executive Board members undertook active service in their respective communities.

A heavy load was placed on central body and local union officials. . . . . Instead of weakening under the burden, as some who did not know them expected they would do, they straightened up and went into action like veterans who had been chaffing at delay. Observers watching with cynical eyes were astounded. . . . . Throughout the tense weeks during which I ruthlessly loaded work upon local officials in various parts of the state, not a single regular trade unionist with whom I communicated refused duty. Instead many who were already overburdened offered to do more. Here and there were cases in which local officials found some trouble in getting together and marshalling their forces. As soon as these points were discovered one of the vice-presidents was hurried to the scene and invariably succeeded in getting action.

The strain on the office of the secretary-treasurer was tremendous. Funds had not been available for the organization of an additional force in time to be of service during the campaign and the regular force had to be worked to the very limit of endurance.

The financial difficulties were relieved by President Frank Farrington of the United Mine Workers of Illinois who gave us an official assurance that the entire assessment due from all local unions of mine workers would be paid before the close of the campaign.[1]

In order to counteract the influence of the General Committee for the Ratification of the Constitution headed by Judge Orin S. Carter, of the Illinois Supreme Court, a number of progressive citizens, with representative trade unionists, formed the People's Protective League. Mr. Harold Ickes, of Chicago, served as chairman, and he and the members of the League agreed to accept speaking assign-

[1] "Report of Secretary-Treasurer," *Proc.* (1923), p. 116.

ments from the office of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.[1]

The State Federation printed and distributed over 2,000,000 pieces of literature—circulars, pamphlets, and handbills—in addition to 10,000 display "Vote No" posters. It spent $15,000 in the campaign, exclusive of the regular salaries of the office force and similar continuous expenses.[2] As the campaign neared its close, Secretary Olander arranged for "Vote No" banner displays on trucks and automobiles in the shopping districts of one hundred cities and towns, and for the special distribution of literature on Saturday afternoon and evening, December 9. An airplane soared over Chicago dropping "Vote No" handbills signed by a "Lawyers' Association." The stunt was conceived, planned, and paid for in the State Federation office and this group of

[1] Including trade-union officers, the speakers who were sent direct from the office of the Federation were as follows: Mr. John H. Walker, president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Hon. Edward F. Dunne, former governor of Illinois; Harold L. Ickes, chairman of Citizens' Committee Opposed to Proposed Constitution; Clarence Darrow, attorney; William McGinley, attorney, former state representative; William H. Holly, attorney; Wiley W. Mills, attorney; S. J. Konenkamp, former president Commerical Telegraphers' International Union; Eugene Frye, farmer; Gifford Ernst, secretary, Illinois State Farmer-Labor party; Carl D. Thompson, Public Ownership League; Nathan Marc Fine, Chicago; Oscar Nelson, vice-president, Chicago Federation of Labor; Charles B. Stillman, president, American Federation of Teachers; Miss Margaret Haley, Chicago Teachers' Federation; Edward J. Evans, vice-president, Electrical Workers' International Union; C. J. Hayes, president, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen; Miss Agnes Nestor, president, Women's Trade Union League of Chicago; Miss Lillian Herstein, Chicago High School Teachers; Dennis McCarthy, legislative representative, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen; Al Towers, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; James H. Connors, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Joseph W. Morton, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Thomas Kelly, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Miss Mary McEnerney, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Waldo Cross, vice-president, Illinois State Federation of Labor; Victor A. Olander, secretary-treasurer, Illinois State Federation of Labor.—*Ibid.*

[2] *Proc.* (1922), p. 114.

lawyers was used to offset the Bar Association, which had gone on record in favor of the new constitution.[1] The teachers put up a most effective fight, including a house-to-house canvass after school hours, and firemen, policemen, and municipal employees generally worked against the new instrument, which they feared would destroy their pension funds.

When the ballots were counted it was found that a landslide vote had buried the proposed new constitution—184,298 for, and 921,398 against. In Cook County, which was conceded to the "No" column in advance on account of the limited representation provided for it in the legislature and on the Supreme Court bench, as well as on account of labor opposition, the ratio was 17 to 1. Downstate, where the ratificationists had counted on piling up a big favorable majority, the new constitution met defeat by more than 2 to 1. "From all indications," announced the *Chicago Tribune*, "every larger city downstate which has manufacturing plants voted against the constitution. In the larger industrial centers like East St. Louis, labor turned in a terrific adverse vote. In Egypt the miners smote it hip and thigh. . . . . In some sections of the southern coal belt the vote ran 25 and 30 to 1 against ratification. . . . ." In Chicago, the residential wards along the North Shore voted against the document by 12 to 1, 23 to 1, 10 to 1; Hyde Park was 7 to 1. Out in Cicero, a community of wage-earners, the vote was 64 to 1; in many precincts the proposed constitution got no votes at all. Even in Evanston, home of Justice Orrin N. Carter, leader of the ratification forces, it was beaten by 3,200 to 2,100.[2]

The State Federation of Labor claims credit for this smashing defeat. "It was organized labor, represented by the

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] *Chicago Tribune*, December 13, 1922; *Proc.* (1923), p. 40.

Illinois State Federation of Labor, that sounded the first danger signal," said Mr. Olander.[1]

For a while the state paid little attention. The first analysis of the proposed new basic law to be made public was . . . . a report from the Rockford Convention. . . . . In record-breaking time the Federation headquarters was supplied with much needed finances through an assessment . . . . and immediately there was inaugurated the most intensive and concentrated campaign ever carried on in the history of the Illinois labor movement.

At that time "comparatively few newspapers had indicated any sympathy with the campaign," and "such political leaders as had declared themselves publicly were very largely in favor of ratification." But owing to the efforts of organized labor in spreading information among every class of citizen, "political leaders who had their ears to the ground began to hear strange rumblings," newspaper editors began to make inquiries, and "men and women who had never before given an approving look toward organized labor began to cast glances in the direction of the trade unions. . . . . The Illinois State Federation of Labor was easily the leading factor against ratification."[2]

Of course, the opposition of organized labor was not the only factor in the situation. The State Federation of Labor could hardly claim, for example, that its arguments were

[1] *WN*, December 16, 1922, under the title, "All Illinois Smiles!"

[2] *Ibid.*, *Proc.* (1922), p. 115. An analysis of the vote by counties gives convincing proof, says Secretary Olander, that the trade-union leadership in the campaign defeated the proposed constitution. "At all points where trade unionists engaged actively in the fight a majority of voters cast their ballots against ratification." In the twenty-seven counties where the new draft received a majority, there were only twelve local organizations in affiliation with the Illinois State Federation of Labor. These twelve unions were in seven different counties. The other twenty counties had no organizations affiliated. Only one of these had a central body, and in the town where that central body was located a substantial majority was polled against the proposed new constitution. "Thus it is made clear beyond all doubt that the trade-union influence of the state decided the issue."—*Proc.* (1923), p. 117.

responsible for the stand of John M. Glenn against ratification. The *Chicago Tribune*—which came over to the "Vote No" camp just two days before election—called attention to "the astonishing way in which the political parties and factions, the various groups in business and industry, and the various schools of political thought . . . . are split over the proposed new constitution."[1] Nevertheless, it was the Illinois State Federation of Labor which began, and which organized and led, the active antiratification campaign. Its influence, though not always apparent, had a great deal to do with lining up even the non-trade-union opposition to the proposed constitution, and it is certain that workingmen voted most solidly against ratification. The issue that overshadowed all others and turned the downstate votes into the "No" column was one raised by the Federation—the tax provision that might subject "every newsboy, scrubwoman and clerk who earns more than $10 a week" to an income tax. Next in importance was the issue of judicial domination.[2]

The battle over the Illinois constitution, beginning back in 1915 or before and culminating in the defeat of the convention draft in 1922, illustrates once more that organized labor is much more potent politically when it is *against* something than when it is *for* something. It could not secure the reforms it wanted from the legislature, and it could not elect its own candidates to the Constitutional Convention, but it could kill an objectionable proposal most effectively when it came before the people.

[1] December 10, 1922.

[2] The *Chicago Tribune* names these as the biggest issues in the public mind

CHAPTER XXVI

INJUNCTION LIMITATION; "YELLOW-DOG" CONTRACTS

The issue of injunction limitation has dominated the legislative program of the Illinois State Federation of Labor since 1913.

In 1913 the national campaign which culminated in the passage of "Labor's Magna Charta," the Clayton Act, was nearing its climax; and the Decatur convention of that year instructed the State Federation's Executive Board to prepare a state anti-injunction bill on the lines of the national measure then pending.[1] The American Federation of Labor shortly afterward circulated a model injunction bill for introduction in state legislatures, and the Illinois State Federation indorsed the American Federation of Labor draft. This first model bill was a copy of a Massachusetts law enacted in 1914 and was introduced into the Illinois legislature in 1915 as the Ryan Bill (H.B.195).[2]

Subsequently, however, the attorneys for the American Federation of Labor drafted an improved measure more on

[1] *Proc.* (1913), p. 167, resolution introduced by V. A. Olander.

[2] *Proc.* (1914), pp. 29, 167, 173. This first American Federation of Labor model bill included in section 1 part of the provisions of the Clayton Act. It declared in section 2 that the right to enter into the relation of employer and employee or to change that relation was to be construed as a personal and not a property right and that where no irreparable property injury was about to be committed no injunction should issue, but the parties should be left to their remedy at law. Section 3 provided that laborers should not be indicted, prosecuted, or tried for entering into combinations to lessen the number of hours of labor or to increase their wages or better their condition, unless they committed an act in itself unlawful.—Quoted in "President's Report," *Proc.* (1914), p. 31.

the lines of the Clayton Act, but somewhat stronger,[1] and as soon as an official copy of the new draft was received the Illinois State Federation had it introduced as H.B. 492. In April, 1915, when it appeared likely that all labor measures in the Illinois legislature were to be shelved, this bill was one of those most prominent in the demands of the "Emergency Convention" of the Illinois State Federation of Labor called together at Springfield.[2] At the request of officers of the Illinois Federation, Samuel Gompers issued a special circular to central bodies and local unions in the state urging that active support be given toward its passage.[3]

At one stage of the campaign in the legislature Mr. Dudley Taylor, an attorney representing employers, argued that the two measures went much further than the labor sections of the Clayton Act, and that he opposed them on that ground. Thereupon the State Federation submitted the language of the Clayton Act, verbatim, as a substitute, but the opposition continued. The proposed injunction legislation was defeated by the "silent vote" method.[4] The Alton convention, meeting in the fall, instructed its officers to reintroduce the anti-injunction bill at the next session and

[1] The bill embodied in its section 1 and section 4 language similar to section 6 of the Clayton Act, with the additional specification that employment relations and the right to do business should be considered personal and not property rights. Sections 2 and 3 of this model bill were substantially the same as section 20 of the Clayton Act, except that the qualifying words "peaceably" and "lawfully" and "by peaceable and lawful means" were omitted in certain places. Section 5 related to the law of conspiracy and does not appear in the Clayton Act; it was nearly the same as section 3 of the Ryan bill summarized in the preceding footnote.

[2] *Proceedings of Emergency Convention* (April 27–28, 1915), p. 17.

[3] Copy of circular, Illinois State Federation of Labor files; interview, V. A. Olander.

[4] That is, the affirmative vote in the House fell short of the majority of the membership required by law, seventy-nine members being recorded as absent or not voting.—*Report of President Walker to Anti-Injunction Conference* (May 28, 1916); *WN*, June 3, 1916.

before election to interrogate all state candidates on their attitude toward it.[1]

Meanwhile, state courts increased their output of injunctions. "This condition, I think, is due to the fact that the Clayton Act has prohibited the federal courts from issuing them and as a result the state courts are now trying to do all the work of this character," said John H. Walker, and he listed eight restraining orders which had been issued against various unions in Illinois during April and May, 1916.[2] In other states the same situation existed, and trade-union leaders decided that if their victory in Congress was to mean anything they must press harder than ever for state legislation.

Acting at the suggestion of Samuel Gompers, the Illinois State Federation held an Anti-Injunction Conference in Chicago on May 28, 1916; the purpose was to agree upon a united plan for securing the desired legislation in Illinois and to call public attention to the injunction issue. The gathering was attended by 350 delegates—officers of national and international unions with headquarters in Illinois, officers of the various divisions of the movement in the state, representatives of the railroad brotherhoods, the Farmers' Union, and city central bodies. Gompers, who was present in person, announced that similar conferences were being held in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Georgia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas, and New York; he planned to attend four of these meetings himself "to help inaugurate state-wide campaigns that shall make this issue the paramount issue . . . . until the law is written upon the statute books of these states."[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1915), p. 66.

[2] "Proceedings of Anti-Injunction Conference," *WN*, June 3, 1916, p. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Henceforth injunction agitation overshadowed everything else in the State Federation's activities. The *News Letter* carried the model bill in issue after issue under the caption "Labor's Injunction-Limitation Bill, Demand Its Enactment in Illinois."[1] Letters went out to every legislative nominee requesting a statement of attitude on the measure, and answers or failures to answer were given wide publicity through the *News Letter*, by correspondence with local unions and central bodies, and at the Quincy convention in October. This convention, attended by 614 accredited representatives and 61 fraternal delegates, was acclaimed "the greatest convention of a State Federation of Labor ever held"; and its enthusiastic proceedings centered about the injunction issue. The delegates voted unanimously to make injunction limitation the paramount issue from labor's viewpoint in Illinois. President Walker announced, to prevent misunderstanding, that "no matter what pet measure you may have in mind . . . . that thing will be subordinated to the effort to secure the enactment of the injunction-limitation bill." To signify the "deadly earnestness" of organized labor on the injunction question the whole convention rose and stood silent for one minute.[2]

An actual instance of the use of the injunction in labor disputes which was given prominence in the *News Letter* shortly afterward illustrates the basis of labor's intense feeling against the writ and against "injunction judges." This case grew out of a strike of unorganized workers employed by the Illinois Malleable Iron Company, the object of the strike being shorter hours, increased pay, better working conditions, and recognition of a union which was organized after the strike began. For several weeks the strike was

[1] Notice that the expression "Anti-Injunction" was dropped in favor of "Injunction-Limitation."

[2] *Proc.* (1916), pp. 56, 60, 155, 165.

effective, and it appeared that the demands of the men would have to be granted. Then on June 8 the company went to the Circuit Court of Cook County and obtained an order for a temporary injunction, which was issued and served on the strikers without previous notice or a chance to state their side of the case. This court order went even further than most of the injunctions then being issued so frequently; it prohibited the strikers and their friends, among other things:

> From publishing, or causing to be published, and from sending out circulars or other communications to the employees of the complainant, calling upon and urging such employees, and attempting to persuade the employees of the complainant, to quit their said work. . . . .
>
> From addressing to any of the complainant's employees the word "scab," or words of similar import to hatred, criticism, censure, scorn, disgrace, or annoyance, because of their employment by the complainant, until this Honorable Court in Chancery sitting, shall make order to the contrary.

It also contained a clause common to nearly all of the writs in similar cases, namely:

> From in any way interfering with, obstructing or stopping the business of the complainant, or of the agents, servants or employees of the complainant, and in the operation of the business of the complainant.

Notwithstanding this injunction, the strikers continued their activities, and on July 21 published the following notice in a Polish newspaper in Chicago:

> To the Strikers of the Illinois Malleable Iron Co.:
>
> Strikers' meetings are held three times a week at night. At these meetings we have crowds of people. Strikers from the above concern have agreed to stay out on strike until the company will give in to their demands. We have made up our minds not to pay any attention to the company's chasers, who make all kinds of promises and draw men into the shops on account of these promises, because the scabs are cursing not only themselves but all others, and they claim they will strike again because they are being cheated by the company's foremen, and also be-

cause they did not receive the wages which the foremen promised them. These foremen have promised gold apples on trees, and now the scabs are only getting $1.61 per day, and they are required to give up money to the bosses.

The committee informs the public in the name of the strikers to stay away from the struck shops, as this would harm us in the battle we have been fighting for twelve weeks, because we are not only fighting for those who are striking but also for those who are working there.

We request all the workingmen to attend the meeting on Sunday, the 23d inst., at 2 o'clock.

COMMITTEE

JN. MICHALEK, *President*
STANLEY KASZUBSKI, *Secretary*

For the act of publishing this notice, not on any charge of libel or slander, Jan Michalek was tried by the judge who issued the injunction, found guilty of contempt of court, and sentenced to ten days in jail and to pay a fine of $100 or go to jail for forty days. The legal department of the Illinois State Federation of Labor appealed the case, and subsequently, a little over one year after the injunction was first issued, the Supreme Court of Illinois held that the injunction had not been violated and reversed the lower court but did not find it necessary to consider the constitutional question of free speech and freedom of the press raised by the defendant. In the meantime, and by aid of the court order, the strike had been broken and the men (except the leaders) had returned to work at their former low wages.[1]

This case illustrates the contention of trade unionists who argue that the labor injunction takes away constitutional rights, such as those guaranteed in Article 2, section 4, of the Illinois Constitution, which states:

Every person may freely speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty; and in all trials for libel, both civil and criminal, the truth when published with good motives and for justifiable ends, shall be a sufficient defense.

[1] *WN*, December 2, 9, 1916; March 10, June 30, 1917.

Furthermore, trade unionists feel, the injunction places in the hands of judges, who are likely to be prejudiced against labor organizations, a dangerous arbitrary power, for alleged violators of an injunction are cited to "show cause" why they should not be punished for contempt, and they are denied under the equity procedure followed in such cases the right of trial by jury and other protections accorded to an accused person in law courts. Preliminary injunctions are often granted solely on the basis of information supplied by the complainant, without opportunity for a hearing of the defendant's side of the case; as a result, the court may be persuaded that unlawful acts have been committed or are about to be committed, and the publication of the injunction in the newspapers may wrongly prejudice the public against the strikers. Subsequent reversal by a higher court, or denial of a permanent injunction, often does no good, for the strike may be broken by aid of the temporary order. Laborers feel that the law, as applied by the injunction, rests unequally on employer and striking employees; for instance, they are often denied the right to persuade, by peaceful means, others to join them, while the employer is defended in his right to hire strike-breakers to take their places; an employer may pay the railroad fare of strike-breakers from other cities, but unions are sometimes enjoined from paying strike benefits. Underlying these objections urged by labor against the use of injunctions in labor disputes is a strong feeling that the courts are substituting personal government for government by law, and placing the property rights of employers above personal rights of laborers. As the *News Letter* said in commenting on the Illinois Supreme Court decision that the injunction had been wrongly applied in the case described above:

> What remedy is offered to the hundreds of malleable iron workers whose strike was broken by the injunction? None! The equity process—in

"equity and good conscience" is the legal fiction used to describe the proceedings—has no remedy to offer them. The strikers had no property involved in the case! Only their personal rights—the sacred rights of a free citizenship—had been interfered with! And the injunction judge deals with such rights only in the interest of property![1]

Enough has been said to indicate the basis of the Illinois State Federation's decision to make the injunction-limitation bill its paramount issue.

Despite the fact that it was the American Federation of Labor's model bill upon which the State Federation had been conducting its campaign for injunction limitation, when it came to introducing a measure into the legislature in 1917 the language of the Clayton Act, sections 20 and 6, was again substituted.[2] It could be urged in support of this proposal that its justice had already been admitted by Congress. As companion measures, two bills providing for jury trial in contempt cases were also introduced, but they were regarded as less important than the measure for limitation of the injunctions themselves.[3] A pleasant surprise to trade-union officials came during the hearings when a petition bearing the signatures of many Chicago lawyers, university professors, social workers, and other people active in civic affairs, was presented on behalf of these legislative proposals.[4] All three bills met defeat in the House by margins of four or five votes.[5]

In the next session of the legislature the injunction-limitation bill was again put forward as the most important

[1] *WN*, June 30, 1917.

[2] *WN*, March 31, 1917.

[3] *WN*, February 3, 1917; interview, V. A. Olander.

[4] *WN*, March 3, 1917.

[5] *WN*, May 19, 1917. State Federation officials announced that the defeat was accomplished through a violation of pre-election pledges on the part of some members and by the absence of other members who had made definite pledges to support the bill. Publication of pre-election letters from legislators who had promised a favorable attitude but voted unfavorably was immediately begun in the *News Letter*.

labor measure; the text introduced continued to be the language of sections 20 and 6 of the Clayton Act.[1] In the House it was sponsored by Representative Soderstrom, of Streator, who worked hard to get it to third reading, where it failed to pass.

The two jury trial bills were introduced by Representative Ronalds, of Eldorado, and "for the first time in the history of labor's legislative efforts we were able to have these bills passed by the House."[2] They then went to the Senate, where labor expected them to be referred to the Judiciary Committee; Lieutenant Governor Oglesby, however, sent them to the hostile Committee on Industrial Affairs, presided over by Senator Turnbaugh, a well-known antilabor member, and there they stayed. The Joint Board remarked in its report on the 1919 session that these two jury trial bills were perhaps to be counted the most important part of its program, not because they would be more beneficial than the injunction-limitation bill, but because they would probably be held constitutional by the courts, while the fate of the main measure would be problematical before the Illinois Supreme Court as then composed.[3]

This very bugaboo of judicial interpretation did raise its head in 1921 and necessitated a revamping of the injunction-limitation bill. The United States Supreme Court handed down a decision construing the Clayton Act (*Duplex v. Deering*, 254 U.S. 443) in which it held that section 6, identical with the last paragraph of the Illinois bill, allows labor organizations to *lawfully* carry out the *legitimate* objects thereof, but that this language cannot be taken to authorize any activity otherwise unlawful, or to enable a normally lawful organization to engage in illegal combina-

[1] "Report of Joint Board" (1919) in *Proc.* (1919), p. 91.

[2] "Report of Joint Board" (1919), *Proc.* (1919), pp. 92–93.

[3] *Ibid.*

tions or conspiracies in restraint of trade as defined by the antitrust laws. As to the first paragraph of section 20 of the Clayton Act, which was paragraph 1 of the Illinois bill, the court held that it "is but declaratory of the law as it stood before." Furthermore, the second paragraph of section 20 (paragraph 2 in the Illinois bill) was held to apply only to disputes between "an employer and employees . . . . etc.," in which the employment relation was a *proximate* one; that is, only to disputes between an employer and *his* employees or employers and *their* employees. The exemption from injunctions was conferred only upon parties directly concerned in the dispute, and not, for example, upon sympathetic unions in another city.[1] What this decision meant, then, was that the Clayton Act as interpreted by the courts had practically not changed the law regarding injunctions in labor disputes one particle. And this was the statute which had been hailed as "Labor's Magna Charta."

The decision produced consternation in State Federation circles. Since it was reasonably certain that the Illinois courts would follow the United States Supreme Court in construing language identical with that of the Clayton Act, there was now nothing to be gained by passing the injunction-limitation bill. Hence, when the Duplex decision was announced just at the beginning of the 1921 legislative session there were hurried conferences with a view to drafting another bill. Secretary Olander and Angus Kerr, attorney for the United Mine Workers of Illinois, gave much thought to the subject and consulted with William Holly, a Chicago attorney, Matthew Woll, Samuel Gompers, and others.[2]

[1] A later case (*Bedford Cut Stone* v. *Journeymen Stone Cutters' Union*, 47 Sup. Crt. 522, decided in 1927) even held that members of the same international union in another city might be enjoined for restraining interstate commerce if they refused to work on stone cut by non-union laborers working in the former jobs of their fellow-members.

[2] Correspondence in Secretary Olander's private file.

The result was a draft which combined portions of the American Federation of Labor model bill of 1916–17, portions of the Clayton Act, portions of the British Trades Dispute Act, and some new provisions. This was introduced in April, 1921, as House Bill No. 590.[1]

The year 1921 was a bad one for organized labor, what with the after-war depression, the nation-wide attack upon union organization launched by "open-shop" employers, and the legislative campaign of the League for Industrial Rights. In the General Assembly the State Federation was hard put to it to stop the antitrade-union measures proposed; its new injunction-limitation bill died in committee. So did the two jury trial bills.[2]

Before the opening of the next legislative session there was another Supreme Court decision (*Truax* v. *Corrigan*, 257 U.S. 312) in which the Supreme Court of the United States declared unconstitutional an Arizona law modeled on the Clayton Act. The objection was that, as the act had been construed by the Arizona Supreme Court, it contravened the Fourteenth Amendment by denying equal protection of the laws, since it made acts lawful when committed in furtherance of a dispute over conditions of employment that were not lawful under other circumstances.

In December, 1922, the Executive Board of the Illinois State Federation of Labor discussed changes in the Illinois bill made necessary by this decision,[3] but the bill drawn up the previous year was finally re-introduced in the next legislature, where, after being reported from committee by a very narrow margin, it died in the House on second reading.[4]

[1] Correspondence, Secretary Olander's private file.

[2] "Joint Board Report" (1921) in *Proc.* (1921), pp. 147, 159.

[3] *WN*, December 30, 1922.

[4] "Joint Board Report," *Proc.* (1923), p. 172.

The report of the Joint Board remarked that "recent court decisions, however, are of such a character that it will probably be necessary to again redraft the bill." To add to these troubles, a decision handed down by the Illinois Supreme Court during the legislative session had held unconstitutional the statute which one of the jury trial bills sought to amend; it therefore became necessary to undertake a redraft of the whole law, after the jury trial bill had been reported favorably to the lower House. As Secretary Olander put it (mildly enough), "the difficulty of providing for state legislation limiting the power of injunction judges has become acute."[1]

President Walker recommended to the 1923 convention that the State Federation continue its fight for an injunction-limitation law, if language could be found not already declared null and void by the courts.

> In the event we cannot find such language, after diligent search, then I recommend that we try to get a law enacted which will give the workers the right to a jury trial in all cases where the alleged contempt of court charged has been committed outside of the presence of the court, or where the alleged act also would have constituted a criminal offense, that is, if we can find language that we can use for that purpose which the courts have not already declared unconstitutional and void. I would further recommend that an amendment to the constitution be drafted which will provide for an inhibition of judges issuing such injunctions as are now issued in labor disputes, and I further recommend that we take whatever steps possible that are within our means, to bring about the election of all judges by popular vote of the people.[2]

These recommendations were adopted by the convention, and the following months saw the agitation for injunction limitation redoubled. The Executive Board detailed Vice-President Al Towers to help President Walker bring the matter to the attention of local unions and central bodies

[1] *WN*, June 23, 1923.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), pp. 82–83.

in the state.[1] At Secretary Olander's suggestion the Chicago Committee on Injunctions, which had been formed to aid in the fight, called in the pastors of churches interested in the injunction problem, and they agreed to form a Pastors' Committee; arrangements were made to consult with priests in the same way.[2] In the primaries of 1924 the Federation was successful for the first time in persuading aspirants for the leading political positions to include injunction limitation in their platforms; the candidates who did so, and who therefore received the support of organized labor, were Newton Jenkins, a progressive seeking the Republican nomination for United States senator, Len Small, in the Republican primaries for governor, and Kent E. Kellar, in the Democratic primaries for governor.[3] Further agitation of the injunction issue resulted from the LaFollette-Wheeler progressive movement of the same year.

When the legislature of 1925 assembled, the most serious struggle so far for the enactment of labor's injunction-limitation bill was begun. The latest edition of the trade-union bill-drafters' attempts to keep one jump ahead of narrowing judicial decisions was introduced as House Bill 28 and Senate Bill 107. It was based on a combination of ideas involved in previous bills, together with suggestions advanced by Andrew Furuseth, of the International Seamen's Union, and worked over by Attorney Ralston and Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor, for introduction in Congress; the Pearre bill introduced in Congress prior to the passage of the Clayton Act; and tentative bills drawn by Attorney Kerr, Father J. W. R. Maguire, of St. Viator's College, and Secretary Olander.[4] It read as follows:

[1] "Minutes of Executive Board," *WN*, August 11, 1923.

[2] *WN*, December 8, 1923.

[3] *WN*, March 22, 1924.

[4] Correspondence in Secretary Olander's private files.

For an Act declaring the right of the People to organize into trade and labor unions and associations and to regulate the procedure in Courts of Equity in relation thereto.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted, etc.: The right of the People of this State to organize into trade and labor unions and associations for the purpose of mutual aid, and maintaining and improving their economic and social conditions, is inherent and inalienable and no restraining order or injunction abridging this right shall be granted by any court of this state or by any judge or the judges thereof.

SECTION 2. No restraining order or injunction abridging the right of free speech, free press, or assembly in a peaceable manner as guaranteed by the Constitution of this State, shall be granted by any court of this state or by any judge or the judges thereof.

SECTION 3. No restraining order or injunction shall be granted by any court of this state, or by a judge or the judges thereof in any case involving or growing out of a dispute concerning terms or conditions of employment, unless necessary to prevent irreparable injury to property or to a property right of the party making the application for which injury there is no remedy at law, and such property or property right must be particularly described in the application which must be in writing and sworn to by the applicant or by the applicant's agent or attorney. Nothing shall be held to be property unless it is land, goods, money or the product of labor or of nature.

SECTION 4. The labor power of a human being is an attribute of individual life and shall not be construed, held, considered or treated as a commodity or as property. No cases arising out of individual or collective contracts to perform personal services or labor or pertaining thereto, or to maintain peace and punish violators thereof, shall be subject to any Court of Equity, but shall be brought in Courts of Law, which shall have exclusive jurisdiction.

SECTION 5. No restraining order or injunction shall be granted by any court of this state or by a judge or the judges thereof enjoining or restraining individuals from doing collectively or by agreement what it would be lawful for them to do individually.

SECTION 6. No restraining order or injunction shall be granted by any court of this state, or by a judge or the judges thereof, enjoining or restraining any person or persons, either singly or in concert, from terminating any relation of employment or from ceasing to perform any work or labor, or from recommending, advising, or persuading others so to do;

or from being upon any public street, or thoroughfare or highway for the purpose of obtaining or communicating information, or to persuade any person or persons to work or to abstain from working, or to employ or to cease to employ any party to a labor dispute involving or growing out of terms or conditions of employment, or to recommend, advise, or persuade others so to do.

SECTION 7. The invalidity of any portion of this Act shall in no way effect the validity of any other portion thereof which can be given effect without such invalid part.

SECTION 8. Any Act or any part of any Act inconsistent with this is hereby repealed.

After viewing the situation, the labor lobby decided to push the bill first in the House. Hearings were held before the Committee on Judiciary at which John H. Walker, Victor A. Olander, and Rev. J. W. R. Maguire spoke for the bill, while vigorous opposition was voiced by Cyrus E. Dietz and Otto Jaburek, attorneys for the Associated Employers of Illinois, and Colon C. H. Fyffe, attorney for the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. The hearing was also attended by the Executive Board of the State Federation of Labor and the other members of the Joint Labor Legislative Board.[1]

The Judiciary Committee reported the bill out favorably and it passed first and second readings without amendment by the House; on March 31 Representative Soderstrom called it up on order of third reading. The roll was called, and the bill received but 75 affirmative votes—2 less than the necessary constitutional majority—and 65 negative votes. Before the result was announced Soderstrom moved to postpone consideration, and thus averted defeat.[2] Then the Joint Board compared the votes in the House with campaign pledges and answers to pre-election question-

[1] *WN*, March 7, 1923.

[2] "Joint Board Report," *Proc.* (1925), p. 253.

naires,[1] new efforts were made to line up favorable votes, and the bill was called up a second time. Now there were only 74 ayes; the bill was defeated.

Then the labor representatives shifted their attack. While opponents were still getting their wind, every section except section 6 of the original proposal was dropped, thus eliminating many of the provisions against which arguments had been directed, and a modified bill, containing only one sentence, was immediately introduced. There had been test votes in the House, so the new attack pressed for a test in the Senate. S.B. 442 went to the Judiciary Committee on May 5, had a hearing on the 13th, passed first reading on the 14th, was amended on second reading and advanced to third reading on May 21, and passed the Senate by a vote of 28 yeas and 17 nays on May 26.[2] Then it went to the House.

With victory in sight, every energy was bent to the task of lining up a few more votes in the House of Representatives. There were conferences with Governor Small to urge his further support of the injunction-limitation bill,[3] and he helped to bring round recalcitrant members of his party. The *News Letter* continued to carry the Republican pledge on the injunction issue in heavy black type in every issue. On the previous votes in the House four colored representatives from a poverty-stricken negro district in Chicago had joined with legislators from the Gold Coast to defeat labor's chief measure; in justification, they denounced trade unions for refusing to admit members of their race. To meet this opposition the State Federation arranged a

[1] "Minutes of Joint Labor Legislative Board," April 21, 22, 1925.

[2] The amendment made by the Senate, with the agreement of labor, inserted the words "peacefully and without intimidation" in four different places in the bill, which consisted of only 150 words.—*WN*, May 23, 1925.

[3] "Minutes of the Joint Board," June 3, 1925, etc.

meeting at its Chicago office in which twenty-six negro officers and members of Chicago unions prepared a memorial to these four legislators pointing out that while some unions discriminated against negroes there were many that helped to organize them, that the attitude of the American Federation of Labor and the Illinois Federation had always been helpful to negro-workers, and that the way to remedy prejudice which did exist was not to arouse further antagonism by voting against legislation desired by trade unionists. In addition, a committee of negro trade unionists went to Springfield to intercede with the colored representatives. The next few weeks witnessed a veritable tug of war between the representatives of the Illinois State Federation of Labor and the Joint Labor Legislative Board on one side and the lobbyists of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, and the Associated Employers on the other.

On June 10 the injunction-limitation bill had successfully weathered committee, first and second reading, and hostile amendments; it was up for passage or defeat.

When the final scene was staged on the floor of the House as the roll call began the situation was as tense as ever witnessed in the legislature. Under the Illinois Constitution, the affirmative votes of a majority of all members elected is required in each house for the passage of a bill. Thus, 77 votes were needed in the lower House. The "ayes" and the "nays" responded sharply to the droning call of the clerk until the last name had been uttered. The affirmative vote had reached only 74! The employers' lobby which occupied most of the space in the galleries, began to look relieved. "Call the absentees," ordered Speaker Robert Scholes. Again the clerk began droning out names. Labor gained one vote in this process and now had 75. . . . . But two more were needed! The crowded galleries were straining to watch the proceedings on the floor. House members were on their feet, congregating in groups, arguing and pleading with each other. Representative R. G. Soderstrom, sponsor of the House bill, moved swiftly from one to the other. . . . . "Verification! Verification!" shouted supporters of the bill, seeking to gain more time. "The clerk will

verify the roll," responded the strong voice of Speaker Scholes, whose own vote had been cast in favor of the labor bill. Again the clerk began droning out the names. Another member recorded his vote for the bill! 76! One more was needed and only a moment remained before the verification would be finished, the vote closed and the result announced. . . . . Then came a gasping shout, with a note of triumph and relief, "77! 77!" Was it true? "Who voted—who was it?" Friend and foe voiced the query. "77," came the answer, "No—78—Brown of Paris—West—Somebody—78—we win—we win!"[1]

What had brought about this labor victory? Of course, the support of the governor and the administration forces in the legislature was an important factor.[2] But more important than the temporary political alignment was the gradual process of conversion to labor's view which had been going on year after year in the legislature and in the minds of the public. "At first," says Secretary Dennis McCarthy of the Joint Board, who had been a labor lobbyist in Springfield for many years, "the legislators, particularly those from downstate, thought that organized labor was a lawless bunch wanting to remove the injunction in order to destroy employers' property; they thought stories about the abuse of the injunction power were falsehoods." As labor came back with its arguments session after session many of them were convinced. An episode which occurred in the northeast part of the state where an injunction was issued against milk producers helped as much as any one thing to bring the farmer representatives around; they began to realize that the injunction might be turned against them as well as against labor.[3]

[1] Victor A. Olander in *WN*, June 13, 1925.

[2] "The anti-injunction bill never would have been passed if it had not been for the support of the state administration and the failure on the part of a large number of the employers and the public to appreciate its dangerous character," said John M. Glenn in his *Manufacturers' News*.—June 20, 1925. Editorial quoted in full in Walker's report, *Proc.* (1925), p. 136.

[3] Interview, Dennis J. McCarthy.

Now the State Federation had at least part of the Injunction-Limitation Law for which it had been fighting for twelve years. The Joint Board sent an engrossed copy of the names of Senators and Representatives who had voted for the bill to each of them. Letters of congratulation arrived from trade-union leaders outside the state; labor papers over the country ran feature articles on this "great legislative victory"; the organ of the American Association for Labor Legislation referred to it as the most important legislation of the year regarding labor disputes; the *Employers' News*, of Chicago, assailed it in a vitriolic front-page editorial; and John M. Glenn, of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, announced in his *Manufacturers' News* that "manufacturers and other employers of Illinois received a very severe blow at Springfield through the passage of the Anti-Injunction Bill." After a lower court had upheld the constitutionality of the new act, William B. Wilson and John P. Frey took occasion in speeches before the next convention to "congratulate the Illinois State Federation of Labor upon having drafted and secured the passage of the first anti-injunction legislation that has stood the test . . . . of the courts."[1]

Just what has Illinois labor secured in this new Injunction-Limitation Law? Have its bill-drafters found a way to steer through the maze of judicial decisions, or will the law prove to be another gold brick, like the Clayton Act and the state laws embodying its language? The full text of the Illinois law (section 6 of the bill originally introduced) is as follows:

SECTION 1. No restraining order or injunction shall be granted by any court of this state, or by a judge or the judges thereof in any case

[1] Minutes of Joint Board, July 1, 1925; *Proc.* (1925), p. 134; *WN*, July 11, 1925; *American Labor Legislation Review*, September, 1925, p. 233; editorials from *Employers' News* and *Manufacturers' News* quoted in full in "President Walker's Report," *Proc.* (1925), p. 136; *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 38.

involving or growing out of a dispute concerning terms or conditions of employment, enjoining or restraining any person or persons, either singly or in concert, from terminating any relation of employment or from ceasing to perform any work or labor, or from peaceably and without threats or intimidation recommending, advising, or persuading others so to do; or from peaceably and without threats or intimidation being upon any public street, or thoroughfare or highway for the purpose of obtaining or communicating information, or to peaceably and without threats or intimidation persuade any person or persons to work or to abstain from working, or to employ or to peaceably and without threats or intimidation cease to employ any party to a labor dispute, or to recommend, advise or persuade others so to do.[1]

The law deals with only one phase of the injunction question, albeit the most important phase to labor. It aims to prevent any "injunction judge" from issuing an order against peaceful picketing. How will it be construed by the courts?

In the first place, is the act constitutional? In a case which arose shortly after its passage Judge Hugo Pam, of the Superior Court of Cook County, said, "Yes," and refused to grant a writ which had been requested.[2] Then some members of the Retail Clerks' Union were cited for violating an injunction against picketing, and in holding them guilty of contempt Judge Dennis E. Sullivan, of the same court, declared the Injunction-Limitation Law "in violation of sub-Section 1 of Section 10 and of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and in violation of Sections 1, 2 and 14 of Article 2 and Article 3 and Section 12 of Article 6 of the Constitution of the State of Illinois of 1870."[3]

[1] *WN*, June 27, 1925.

[2] See his opinion in full, *WN*, August 22, 1925.

[3] The parts of the Constitution of Illinois referred to are as follows (in the order cited): "All men are by nature free and independent, and have certain inherent and inalienable rights—among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these rights and the protection of property, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

This case was appealed with assistance from the State Federation of Labor and its attorneys. The opinion in this case has been the only expression on the new law yet (March, 1929) secured from the Illinois Supreme Court. Said the court, "In our view it is not necessary, in the case before us, to determine the validity of the act and we refrain, therefore, from deciding that question. The rule is that this court will not pass on the constitutionality of the statute unless its validity is necessarily involved in the case. . . . ."[1] The issue of constitutionality hangs fire, therefore.

A question just as important is, How will the language of the act be interpreted? Will it have any practical effect, or will it, like the Clayton Act, be construed in such a way as to leave the situation the same as before? State Federation officials point out that while the language is much like that of the Clayton Act it differs in a vital particular in that the word "lawfully" as a qualification of the manner in which strikers may exercise the rights set forth in the act is not included.

The Clayton Act provides that an injunction shall not issue restraining persons "from attending at any place where any such person or persons may lawfully be, for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating

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"No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law."

"No *ex post facto* law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or making any irrevocable grant of special privileges or immunities shall be passed."

"The powers of the government of this State are divided into three distinct departments—the Legislative, Executive and Judicial; and no person, or collection of persons, being one of these departments, shall exercise any power properly belonging to either of the others, except as hereinafter expressly directed or permitted."

"The circuit courts shall have original jurisdiction of all causes in law and equity, and such appellate jurisdiction as is or may be provided by law, and shall hold two or more terms each year in every county. The terms of office of judges of circuit courts shall be six years."—Constitution of Illinois.

[1] *Isidore Ossey* v. *Retail Clerks' Union*, 326 Ill. Rep. 405, quoted in full in *WN*, June 25, 1927.

information, or from peacefully persuading any person to work or to abstain from working." The corresponding part of the Illinois law, instead of using the vague phrase, "any place where any such person or persons may lawfully be," which in the Clayton Act gives the equity judge a considerable degree of discretion in the determination of what places persons may "lawfully" attend, presents a specific direction to the judge by referring to "any public street or thoroughfare or highway," this being qualified by the words "peaceably and without threats or intimidation," the use of which, however, does not give as much discretion to the judge as does the word "lawfully."[1]

On the other hand, the opinion of the Illinois Supreme Court in the Retail Clerks' case referred to in the foregoing said in part: "The statute upon which the appellants rely for immunity [i.e., Injunction-Limitation Law] is substantially the same as section 20 of the act of Congress of October 15, 1914, known as the Clayton Act," and then the court proceeded to apply the stringent rule laid down by the United States Supreme Court in the Tri-City case (257 U.S. 84), a rule which practically declared that there could be no such thing as peaceful picketing. The conviction of the retail clerks on a charge of contempt of court for picketing was upheld, for they were found guilty of "obstruction, intimidation, and violence." "Even if the validity of the act invoked by the appellants be assumed, a question not now decided, it afforded them no immunity for their acts."[2] Though the court mentions violence in this particular case, the inference is that even had no violence occurred the Injunction-Limitation Law would not have been held to grant immunity from injunction to any pickets except the lone emissaries suggested by Chief Justice Taft in the Tri-City case.

Thus, it appears that the Injunction-Limitation Law which the State Federation fought so long to obtain may

[1] Victor A. Olander, *WN*, June 27, 1925.

[2] *Ossey* v. *Retail Clerks*, cited above.

prove a disappointment in the courts. The whole question is still undetermined, however, and the final outcome can only be conjectured.

As for the actual effect of the act thus far, Federation officials noticed a marked decrease in the number and severity of injunctions in Illinois immediately following its passage. Now, however, the situation is much like it was before, though some judges are more careful than they were. All concerned are marking time while another test case goes up to the Supreme Court.[1]

Recently the injunction-limitation campaign has entered a new phase, owing to a new weapon forged against labor since the Hitchman decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1916.[2] That decision held that union organizers might be restrained from urging employees to join the union if those employees had signed a non-union or "yellow-dog" contract in which they agreed not to have dealings with a labor organization. Under this rule many employers have adopted the expedient of forcing all their employees to sign "yellow-dog" contracts, perhaps as a condition of getting a job, or perhaps at the conclusion of an unsuccessful strike, and some courts have then consented to issue injunctions forbidding any attempts—even by the most peaceful methods of persuasion—to organize these employees. Interpretations of the Hitchman decision vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but where "yellow-dog" contracts have been held to constitute valid property rights of the employer the effect has been to keep many employees *incommunicado* so far as labor organizers are concerned. This constitutes a new and serious legal menace to the further growth of the trade-union movement.

[1] Interview, Victor A. Olander.

[2] *Hitchman Coal and Coke Company* v. *Mitchell*, 245 U.S. 229.

Many years ago trade unions sought to combat the "yellow-dog" contract (earlier called the "ironclad") by securing statutes which would make it a punishable offense for any employer to discharge an employee on account of membership in a labor organization; but such laws were held unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in the Adair case and in *Coppage* v. *Kansas*.[1]

For a time these decisions were thought to bar the way against any attempt to combat the obnoxious contracts by legislative enactment. But in 1925 a new line of attack was worked out by John P. Frey and other officers of the Ohio State Federation of Labor, in co-operation with interested legal experts such as Dean Roscoe Pound, of the Harvard Law School, Ernst Freund, of the University of Chicago Law School, and Herman Oliphant and others, of the Columbia Law School. Instead of providing a punishment for employers who force their workers to sign non-union contracts —a method held to be unconstitutional—the new endeavor is simply to have the legislature declare that such contracts are contrary to public policy and void. This, it is hoped, will destroy the usefulness of the contracts as a basis for injunctions and will avoid the pitfall of unconstitutionality. The anti-yellow-dog contract bill drafted on this new plan contains only one sentence:

SECTION 1. Every undertaking or promise hereafter made, whether written or oral, express or implied, constituting, or contained in, any contract or agreement of hiring or employment between any individual, firm, company, association, or corporation, and any employee or prospective employee of the same, whereby (*a*) either party to such contract or agreement undertakes or promises not to join, become, or remain, a member of any labor organization or of any organization of employers, or (*b*) either party to such contract or agreement undertakes or promises that he will withdraw from the employment relation in the event that he joins, becomes or remains, a member of any labor organization or of any

[1] 208 U.S. 161; 236 U.S. 1

organization of employers, is hereby declared to be contrary to public policy and wholly void.[1]

This bill was introduced in Ohio, Illinois, and California in 1925, but so far it has not been enacted in any state. The state federation officials of these three commonwealths have co-operated in pushing the measure and have had the assistance of the American Federation of Labor.[2]

In Illinois it was first introduced in the General Assembly in 1925, and in 1927 it assumed first place on the State Federation's program. No progress could be made in the legislature, however, while the interpretation of the Injunction-Limitation Law in the courts was still uncertain. The East St. Louis convention of the Federation (1927) directed its officers "to continue to make the 'yellow-dog contract' and correlative subjects or matters pertaining to the misuse of the injunction writ in labor disputes the paramount legislative issue of the Illinois State Federation of Labor."[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1927), p. 277.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 129–35, gives history of the bills.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), p. 251; (1927), pp. 131, 277.

CHAPTER XXVII

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY, 1914–28

I

A. THE WORKDAY AND WORK WEEK

In 1914 the American Federation of Labor declared that "the question of the regulation of the wages and the hours of labor should be undertaken through trade union activity, and not to be made subjects of laws through legislative enactment, excepting in so far as such regulations affect or govern the employment of women and minors, health and morals; and employment by federal, state or municipal government."[1] At the Illinois State Federation's 1915 session delegates from a miners' local and from the Danville central body protested against this policy, pointing out that public declarations by Gompers against legislative regulation of hours of labor for adult male workers had been widely circulated and used on posters by manufacturers' associations in California, Oregon, and Washington to defeat the campaign for securing eight-hour laws through the initiative and referendum. They favored "an eight-hour day by any means we can get it," and one of them remarked, "This convention ought to go on record opposing such tomfoolery as goes on in the American Federation of Labor." A resolution instructing the American Federation of Labor delegate "to stand by the eight-hour law by legislation" was carried in spite of the arguments of the Resolutions Committee and conservative leaders like Matthew Woll.[2] The convention of 1914 had even instructed the officers to have a general eight-hour bill

[1] *Proc.*, American Federation of Labor (1914), pp. 421 f.

[2] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 295–301.

introduced in the Illinois legislature.[1] These two conventions raised the ghost of the old eight-hour agitation in the Illinois Federation for the last time; eight hours by law for adult male workers was a dead issue even then, and it has since remained in its grave.

The State Federation has introduced a "one day rest in seven" bill at practically every legislative session since 1913. Of late years it has been pressed more vigorously than before; the Actors' Equity Association has been particularly active in its support, while the most aggressive opposition has come from theater owners.[2] In addition to labor organizations, representatives of the Chicago Church Federation, the National Catholic Welfare Council, and the American Association for Labor Legislation have appeared at hearings in favor of the measure. On the other side have been lobbyists from the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, the Associated Employers of Illinois, the cement and zinc manufacturers of Illinois, and the telephone interests.[3]

In 1915 one such bill passed the House, but the Senate amended it and on the last day of the session the House refused to concur.[4] In 1923 the measure passed the House again, after being amended to make it sufficiently flexible to permit of emergency work in the cases of storm, fire, or floods, and under circumstances that might be deemed reasonable by the Industrial Commission. It died on second reading in the Senate.[5] In two sessions since, the bill has met its fate at the hands of the lower chamber.[6]

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 258.

[2] *Report of Joint Board* (1927), p. 36.

[3] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 263, citing *News Letter* articles.

[4] *Joint Board Report* (1915), p. 12.

[5] *Ibid.* (1923), p. 26.

[6] *Ibid.* (1925), p. 16; (1927), pp. 35–36.

B. PAYMENT OF WAGES

In 1927 the Federation brought about the enactment of a Wage Guarantee Law providing that owners of stock in corporations shall be personally liable, in addition to their corporate liability, for two weeks' unpaid labor. This measure passed both houses of the Assembly rather to the surprise of the labor lobby as well as the employers' lobby. The bill suddenly appeared to have a chance when the session was nearly over and the outlook for labor measures was dark. State Federation officials hurried to Governor Small and pointed out that here was an opportunity to add a real piece of labor legislation to the record of his administration; he used his influence in the legislature, and the necessary number of votes was forthcoming. The opposing lobby did not find out what was going on until the bill was almost through; then Representative Schnackenberg, of Chicago, rose in the House to move reconsideration of the vote by which it had been passed, but just at that moment word came that the Senate had concurred in the House amendment and the measure was out of reach, having received the approval of both chambers. Representatives of corporation interests showered Governor Small with protests, but he signed the bill and it became law.[1]

Following the enactment of the Semimonthly Pay Day Law in 1913, the State Typographical Union proposed that the Federation should now seek a law to require payment in coin or currency, and the Federation convention approved the suggestion. A few years later, however, the subject was discussed again. Some trades preferred payment by check; others wanted currency. The State Federation decided "that this body, representative of all the trades,

[1] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1927), p. 265; *WN*, July 9, 1927; interview, V. A. Olander.

could not well afford to take any action here which would be detrimental to the interests of any of the trades allied if it could possibly avoid doing so," and so concluded to seek no general law on the subject, but to help each organization to secure by trade agreement whatever method of payment it liked best. Strangely enough, the identical resolution rejected for this reason in 1918 was introduced and adopted without discussion in 1919. It was not deemed important, however, and apparently there was no bill framed to cover the point. It has not been mentioned in subsequent conventions.[1]

C. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND COMFORT

Since the passage of the comprehensive law of 1909 the State Federation has worked consistently for improvement of health, safety, and comfort standards by seeking specific amendments to remedy conditions complained of by workers or uncovered by factory inspectors. Thus, it has indorsed and worked for the passage of bills regarding the use of automatic hammers, regulating steam-boiler operation, regarding poisonous fumes and dust, for testing of ropes and tackles, against basement kitchens, for extension of the Wash House Law, for prohibition of homework, for a bill to compel street-car companies to provide comfort stations and other improvements in working conditions for their employees, and for a proposal of the retail clerks to forbid the existence of living quarters in the rear of food or clothing shops.[2]

In return for the co-operation of the brotherhoods on the Joint Labor Legislative Board, measures for the improve-

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 255; (1918), pp. 201–2; *WN*, December 14, 1918; *Proc.* (1919), p. 235.

[2] *Proc.* (1914), p. 200; (1919), pp. 236 f.; (1914), p. 252; (1917), p. 288; (1917), p. 286; (1916), p. 437; (1917), p. 149; (1919), p. 94; (1923), p. 469; (1920), p. 208; (1925), p. 119.

ment of railroad working conditions have always appeared on the labor lobby's program. Chief among these have been bills providing for automatic fire doors on locomotives, limiting the length of freight trains, and prescribing qualifications for flagmen.[1] A bill favored by the carmen, to require shelter for workmen engaged in the construction and repair of railway cars, occupied a prominent place on the legislative program for several sessions.[2]

Out of all these miscellaneous proposals advanced by various crafts and backed by the State Federation a good many bits of protective legislation have resulted. Taken one at a time they may not seem significant, but in total they represent a substantial benefit to the working people of the state. The existence of a strong State Federation capable of throwing its weight behind the pleas of even a small craft union on these matters is important to the labor movement.

Lately the Federation has begun to seek a complete revision and recodification of the statutes relating to working conditions, together with an overhauling of the factory inspection provisions and improvements in administration. This is in line with recommendations made by the director of the Department of Labor and the chief factory inspector in several annual reports.[3]

Because the Mines Investigation Commission has prepared and agreed on all coal-mining laws enacted in Illinois since 1910, and because the Illinois Mine Workers have a strong state organization of their own, the State Federation has had little to do with purely mining legislation in recent years. Of course, the Joint Labor Legislative Board assists the mine-workers whenever possible, and the fact that John

[1] See, for example, *Proc.* (1921), p. 164; (1923), p. 281; (1925), p. 250.

[2] *Proc.* (1916), p. 177; (1917), p. 152; (1921), pp. 163, 302; (1923), p. 181.

[3] *Proc.* (1926), pp. 100, 272.

H. Walker is himself a member of the miners' union makes this assistance the more effective.

The metalliferous miners of Illinois, a very small group in one of the southern counties, are neither as numerous nor as well organized as the coal-miners, and until 1921 they did not have the benefit of laws to guard their health and safety. The Metalliferous Mining Law enacted in that year was the result of a seven-year fight waged by the workers in the fluorspar mines of Hardin County, assisted substantially by the Illinois State Federation of Labor and the United Mine Workers of the adjacent territory.[1]

D. ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

Since the enactment of the Workmen's Compensation Law in 1911 and its improvement in 1913, the efforts of the State Federation on this subject have been directed by three purposes: (1) to make the compensation law compulsory; (2) to establish a state insurance fund; (3) to increase the amounts of compensation, extend the scope of the law, correct defects in operation, and generally to bring about continuous improvement.

It was thought at first that a compulsory compensation law would be unconstitutional; hence, the earlier acts were so framed as to give the employer an option of coming under the compensation law or remaining under a liability law without recourse to the "defenses." The State Federation realized that certain and ample provision for all cases could be had only under a mandatory law, but it concluded that the risk of losing everything by adding a compulsory provision was too great, and that the constitution must first be amended.[2] On March 6, 1917, however, the United States

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 81, "Report of President Walker"; Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 373 ff.

[2] *Proc.* (1914), p. 23; (1915), p. 69.

Supreme Court handed down a decision[1] in which it upheld the constitutionality of a compulsory state compensation act. Thereupon a joint committee of employers and employees called together by the Industrial Board (the administrative agency under the compensation law) agreed upon a compulsory measure for Illinois and had it introduced into the 1917 General Assembly. Governor Lowden sent a special message to the legislature recommending its passage; he expressed the opinion that in the long run it would benefit the employer, the employee, and the public alike. The bill was passed, but State Federation officials reported that it "did not have the slightest chance until Governor Lowden . . . . urged its passage, and until several prominent employers who were operating under the Compensation Act consented to its enactment."[2]

Thus the first objective of organized labor in the improvement of the compensation law was achieved.

The president's report to the State Federation in 1914 compared insurance rates in Illinois with those under Ohio's state fund and showed that a great saving could be made by eliminating the heavy overhead and competitive costs of private, profit-making insurance firms. "This really makes clear that if we had a general state insurance fund . . . . we could practically double the amounts that are now being paid in our state without adding another cent to the cost for the industry"; and at the same time the "cold blooded, sordid, greedy influences" of the private insurance company would be eliminated from settlements under the compensation law.[3] These have been the two chief reasons impelling organized labor to seek the creation of a state fund.

[1] *New York Central R. R. Co.* v. *White*, 243 U.S. 188.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 464–65; *WN*, June 16, 1917.

[3] *Proc.* (1914), p. 23; (1916), pp. 231–32; (1917), p. 287.

Bills on the subject were introduced in 1919, 1921, 1923, and 1925, but none of them passed. Though conventions of the Illinois State Federation of Labor continued to reaffirm their previous demands for a state insurance fund, President Walker commented in 1922 that the labor representatives in the legislature had found the General Assembly unfriendly and had preferred to take the improvements in the compensation law offered by way of agreement with employers rather than to risk all in a finish fight for state insurance.[1] In 1923, however, there was a determined battle on the subject over a competitive state fund plan introduced by Representative K. C. Ronalds. After it had passed the House, opponents succeeded in killing it in the Senate by tactics of delay.[2] The state insurance bill was not pressed in 1925 because the labor lobby felt that there was little chance of enacting it, because the injunction-limitation bill had right of way, and because a hard fight on the subject might endanger the system of joint agreement on compensation amendments which had been revived after a break in 1923. Again in 1927 the prospects for state industrial insurance seemed hopeless, and the issue was not raised in the legislature; other bills with greater chance of success were pushed instead.[3]

The second objective of the Federation for improvement of the Workmen's Compensation Law has not been attained, therefore. The large private insurance firms, who would lose a lucrative business if a state fund were established, have been its principal opponents. They have been aided by the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, though it is hard to see why manufacturers should oppose a proposal which would

[1] *Proc.* (1919), p. 326; (1920), p. 207; (1921), p. 297; (1922), pp. 144, 405.

[2] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 471 f. for a more detailed account of this and other incidents in the state insurance fight.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), p. 250; interview, V. A. Olander.

probably benefit them (through lower insurance costs) as well as the workers. It seems that the various "crafts" of business men respect each other's autonomy and back each others' demands in somewhat the same way as do federated labor organizations.[1]

The third objective, continuous improvement of the Compensation Law from session to session, has been sought by the method of conference and compromise between representatives of employers and employees, who then submit an "agreed" bill to the legislature. In 1915, for example, the State Industrial Board selected a joint committee of employers and employees, who, after several weeks of endeavor, agreed on a measure to be presented to the General Assembly. President Walker commented that while the improvements secured were not all that labor wanted, they were something, and "I am thoroughly convinced that had we not reached an agreement on this bill, we would have been unable to procure anything at all that meant progress."[2]

In the legislative sessions of 1917, 1919, and again in 1921 agreed bills were introduced and improvements in the Compensation Law obtained. The Coal Operators' Association refused to enter the agreement in the latter year, however, and made a fight of its own for some amendments which would have meant steps backward in the compensation system; the result was that the labor group had to accept something less than the agreed bill.[3] Year by year, reported

[1] John H. Walker stated to the 1921 convention that "the insurance companies . . . . are the only opponents to this kind of legislation in our state today. A great many employers publicly say they want a state insurance fund and a great many more refuse to say anything publicly, but tell us privately that they want it, though they dare not say so openly or the insurance companies will either refuse to take their risk . . . . or . . . . raise their premiums. . . . ."—*Proc.* (1921), pp. 87–88.

[2] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 68–69.

[3] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1921), p. 155.

President Walker to the 1921 convention, "our experiences in attempting to make reasonable progress under the Compensation Law by joint conferences have been getting more and more difficult, disagreeable and more and more uncertain." Heretofore the Joint Board had thought it best to take what it could get by the conference method, but now President Walker recommended that the State Federation present its own case directly to the legislature, "that we give credit to the men who support us and that we place responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of those who oppose these humane measures."[1]

Accordingly, the State Federation prepared its own bill in 1923 and had it introduced by Representative R. G. Soderstrom, of Streator.[2] This bill increased the amount of compensation for various sorts of injuries, provided that disability or death from occupational disease should be treated as an occupational injury, added to the list of extra-hazardous industries, eliminated the provisions of the act which required notice of an accident even when the employer had knowledge of it already, and made other changes. It was passed in the House by a vote of 84 to 6 and then went to the Senate, where it expired when Senator Dailey failed to convene the judiciary committee.[3]

The representatives of organized labor concluded that there was more to be obtained by the method of agreement than by fighting it out in the legislature; so in 1925 we find the Federation and its allied organizations meeting with the employers again under the auspices of the Industrial Commission. After a number of conferences the two sides agreed

[1] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 85–87.

[2] Some conferences were held with the Industrial Commission and with representatives of employers, but there was no agreement.—*WN*, January 7, March 17, April 14, 1923.

[3] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1923), p. 175.

upon a bill which contained provisions somewhat like those in the 1923 bill which labor had failed to push through unaided, and this measure was passed with practically no opposition in either House.[1] A similar process resulted in further amendments in 1927.[2]

In spite of the amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Law passed by every General Assembly since 1911, except that of 1923, the Illinois law is still considerably below the standards set by other industrial states and by experts on the subject, in amount of benefits, in proportion of industrial workers covered, and in provisions for administration.[3] Reform of the Workmen's Compensation Law meets with more than ordinary difficulties, not only in the opposition of employers, or of insurance companies to the movement for a state fund, but on account of the influence of attorneys who profit from the litigation that an improved compensation law might avoid. There is reason to think that some attorneys employed by the labor movement may not be entirely unbiased in their counsel on such legislation.[4]

E. CHILD LABOR

The Illinois State Federation of Labor favored the proposed child-labor amendment to the federal Constitution and instructed its representatives to make every effort to have it ratified by Illinois.[5] In addition, the Legislative Committee urged upon delegates to the Peoria convention of 1924 the importance of an active campaign of education in support of

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 469. See this reference for details.

[2] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1927), pp. 266–69; *WN*, January 8, 1927.

[3] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 429 f., for comparison of the Illinois law with the compensation laws of other states and with certain standards.

[4] Interviews, Duncan McDonald and others.

[5] *Proc.* (1922), p. 411; "Minutes of Executive Board," *WN*, August 16, 1924; *Proc.* (1924), p. 424.

the measure, "as an effort is being made to have its provisions misrepresented." The *Weekly News Letter* in the next few months carried many articles on child labor, and the officers made talks on the proposed amendment before various organizations and by radio.[1]

The widespread, heavily financed, and largely untruthful campaign carried on throughout the country against the proposed Child Labor Amendment is well known. As a result of this misrepresentation, combined with a certain amount of honest sentiment for "states' rights," legislatures began to reject the resolutions of ratification, and, as President Walker reported to the 1925 convention,

> the women's organizations of Illinois that were interested in this amendment, came to the conclusion that it would be unwise to have it acted upon at the recent session of the legislature, for the reason that they would not have the time and did not have the means with which to answer and offset this propaganda and make this situation clear to the members of the legislature, before a vote would be taken upon it. They therefore decided to try and have action postponed. . . . .
>
> This information was communicated to the Illinois Joint Labor Legislative Board by Miss Agnes Nestor, who represented the Women's Trade Union League on that body and who is in constant communication with all Illinois state women's organizations that are interested in labor affairs.

The governor co-operated by delaying his message on the subject for some time, and when the proposed amendment was finally brought to the attention of the legislature "it was so late that nothing could be done with it, and no action was taken."[2]

Though President Walker thought at this time that "without doubt this matter will be acted upon at the next session of the Illinois Legislature," the resolution of ratification was not even introduced in the session of 1927. By that

[1] *WN*, 1924–25, *passim*; "President's Report," *Proc.* (1925), pp. 142 f.

[2] "Report of President Walker," *Proc.* (1925), pp. 142 f.

time the fate of the amendment had been determined in other states, and there was nothing to be gained by pushing it and arousing antagonism on other labor bills. Furthermore, the ardor of some of the trade-union leaders for the proposed amendment had been diminished by dangers which they thought might lurk in the grant of a Congressional power to "regulate" the labor of children; "regulate" might be construed, they feared, to sanction compulsory labor laws which trade unionists in this country have vigorously opposed.[1]

Measures for the improvement of the state child-labor laws have always received the support of the Federation, and votes for such bills are recorded by the Joint Board as "favorable to labor." Nevertheless, the child-labor bills introduced in the legislature of 1915 and those passed in subsequent sessions have been sponsored primarily by groups other than the State Federation—the Illinois Committee on Social Legislation made up largely of individuals interested in welfare work, organizations of women, and the State Department of Factory Inspection. This was the case with the measures passed in 1917 and 1921.[2] A proposal to raise the educational qualification for employed children between fourteen and sixteen was introduced in the 1927 legislature at the request of the Illinois Child Labor Committee, which included in its membership the Illinois State Federation of Labor, the Illinois League of Women Voters, the Illinois State Teachers' Association, the Illinois Women's Trade Union League, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, the Illinois Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, and local organizations.[3]

[1] Interview, Victor A. Olander. The amendment reads: "The Congress shall have power to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age. . . . ."

[2] See Beckner, chaps. vii, viii.

[3] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1927), p. 283.

F. WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

A vigorous fifteen-year fight for a women's eight-hour bill, sponsored by the Women's Trade Union League, directed by Agnes Nestor, and backed by the Illinois State Federation of Labor has failed to overcome the strenuous opposition of manufacturers, canners, store-owners, hospitals, telephone companies, and other employers of women. There has been no amendment of the Women's Ten-Hour Law since 1911, though the battle over that statute has been a regular feature of the biennial sessions of the General Assembly.

In 1915 the campaign was for a nine-hour day and fifty-hour week. In 1917 an eight-hour bill was defeated, in spite of the fact that both Democratic and Republican state conventions had declared for shorter hours for women and that the governor used all the influence he could bring to bear and wrote a special message to the Assembly on the subject. As a compromise, the legislature set up a commission known as the Illinois Industrial Survey, instructing it to investigate and report at the next session. In 1919 a majority of the commission recommended an eight-hour day and forty-eight hour week for women workers on grounds of health. A bill passed by the Senate placed the limitation at nine hours a day and exempted mercantile establishments, and in the House still further amendments made the original measure unrecognizable. In conference, Governor Lowden, who was very anxious to have a women's bill enacted for the sake of his record, submitted a "classified" bill as a compromise, but organized labor refused to accept it and secured its defeat.[1] Two years later the eight-hour bill was rejected

[1] The bill provided for a nine-hour day and fifty-hour week for factories and mechanical establishments, a ten-hour day and fifty-five hour week for mercantile establishments, laundries, etc., a ten-hour day and fifty-eight hour week for hotels and restaurants, a ten-hour day and sixty-hour week for canneries, and extremely

in the Senate, but labor representatives drew some comfort from the fact that "for the first time, a real Eight-Hour bill was considered throughout, and received a roll call."[1] In 1923 a straight Eight-Hour bill weathered a deluge of hostile amendments in the House and went to the Senate, which adopted an amendment by Senator Hicks to put the regulation of hours of work for women into the hands of the Department of Labor. Then it refused to pass the bill as amended, and refused to reconsider the amendment; this killed the bill.[2] In 1925 the Women's Trade Union League reached an agreement with the Illinois Bell Telephone Company on several provisions, thus removing the opposition of that interest, but in spite of other concessions the rest of the opposition continued, with canneries and hospitals still fighting for full exemption. The bill lacked one vote in the House at first, and after postponement gained seven votes but lost ten; so it failed without going to the Senate.[3] The legislature of 1927 again refused to enact an eight-hour law for women workers, though its advocates made further concessions to meet the objections of small-town merchants who wanted a ten-hour Saturday. This time a bill passed the Senate and failed by a narrow margin in the House.[4]

The Illinois State Federation of Labor has given its hearty support to the Women's Trade Union League throughout this long struggle. The women's eight-hour bill has occupied a place on its program second only to the bills

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liberal exceptions for emergencies and unforseen contingencies. This bill, said the Joint Board, was no improvement over existing legislation; "in fact it nullified many of the best features of the present Women's Ten-Hour Law."—*Proc.* (1919), pp. 94–96.

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 153.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), pp. 182–94.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 266–71.

[4] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 279–81.

relating to the injunction and on a par with such measures as the old-age pension bill promoted by the miners.[1]

Attempts fostered by the Women's Trade Union League, the Consumers' League, and similar groups to secure a minimum-wage law for women have been mentioned before.[2] Little prominence was given the minimum-wage proposals in the reports of the Joint Board or in the *News Letter*, and they were hardly mentioned in conventions. Since 1923 they have been abandoned completely on account of the Supreme Court decision in the District of Columbia minimum-wage case.

The Federation has expressed its disapproval of the move on the part of the National Women's party to add a blanket equality amendment to the Federal constitution, for this would endanger all laws for the protection of women in industry; it has opposed similar proposals introduced in the state legislature.[3]

G. EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT

Extensions and improvements of the free employment service in Illinois have been regarded by the Joint Board as "favorable" legislation, though such improvements have generally been initiated and sponsored by committees of public-spirited citizens or by public commissions, not by the labor movement itself.[4] The State Federation, through its officers, has co-operated with such groups, and has always been on guard to see that no strike-breaking influence was slipped into the employment office system.

[1] Interview, Agnes Nestor; *Reports of Joint Board, passim*; *Weekly News Letter, passim.*

[2] In Part II, chap. xvi.

[3] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 409–10; *Proc.* (1923), p. 165.

[4] See, for details of the laws enacted in Illinois on this subject, Beckner, *op. cit.*, chap. xiv.

The problem of unemployment has naturally occupied most attention during or just following periods of depression. In 1914, 1915, and 1916 serious consideration was given to the subject. A special committee (John Werlik, chairman; Mary O'Reilly, secretary; John Fitzpatrick; Joseph W. Morton; and Robert G. Fitchie) submitted an able and comprehensive report on unemployment to the Quincy convention of 1916. This report dealt with such topics as "Classification of Unemployment," "Need of Data," "Organization and Education," "Causes of Unemployment," "Outline of Remedies," "Remedies Which Have Been Tried" (including public employment bureaus and insurance plans in Germany, New Zealand, Ghent, and Great Britain), "What Has Been Done in America," "Co-operatives," "Unemployment Insurance," and specific details in regard to the unemployment problem in Chicago and Illinois.[1]

The remedies suggested by the committee were explained by Miss O'Reilly, who said they had begun by picking out the people who ought not to be in industry.

> That meant we had to take away the low paid labor which was competing with the regular, normal working class. There should be no child laborers, no convict laborers, no cheap, exploited women laborers, and the question of immigration should be handled so that there would not be an available supply of foreign immigrants.
>
> The next question was to find work for those that were left. That would bring us to the question of unemployment bureaus. . . . .
>
> . . . . The next thing is to provide public works for those people for whom there is no work. The government ought to be ready to start in with projects that will provide work for those people, to be alternated with private seasonal work.
>
> Even after we have taken out the low paid element from competition with labor, placed the employment bureaus where they belong, and provided public work for the balance, you will find the present industrial system demands a reserve of labor which must be present and ready when

[1]*Proc.* (1916), pp. 106–25, 282–85.

called upon. That reserve of labor should be paid, should be taken care of during the necessary idle period. . . . . That brings us to the last point in our recommendations, which is a recommendation for unemployment insurance. . . . . The countries of Europe have developed unemployment insurance. . . . . We hope before this year is over we will be ready to draw bills on unemployment insurance and crystallize our ideas on the subject.

Matthew Woll was inclined to look upon unemployment insurance with disfavor. Secretary O'Reilly explained that the only definite recommendation of her committee was that the question be studied by the Illinois Federation and by the American Federation of Labor; and on this understanding the report was adopted.

In 1916 a Special Committee was appointed to look into abuses current in the conduct of private employment offices, and its report adopted by the next convention recommended a system of national and state agencies under the United States Department of Labor. Succeeding conventions urged the abolition of private employment agencies altogether.[1]

During the after-war depression President Walker ascribed the large amount of unemployment to big profiteering corporations, drunk with power, who, he said, were deliberately trying "to break the spirit of the American workingman and woman and crush their organizations out of existence." The convention asked the state of Illinois to speed up its road-building program to give employment to those out of work.[2]

In 1924 a resolution introduced by the O'Fallon Mine Workers' Local Union proclaimed that "it is no fault of the workers that they are thrown idle as they are ready, willing and anxious to work, and the men and women should be protected in some way against enforced idleness. . . . . This is a social question as it affects all our people." There-

[1] *Proc.* (1916), p. 234; (1917), p. 120; (1918), p. 181; (1919), p. 241.

[2] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 52, 217, 356.

fore, the Legislative Committee of the Illinois State Federation of Labor was instructed "to take up and try to have enacted into law 'Unemployment Insurance.' " As a temporary relief, public works should be pressed. The resolution was concurred in unanimously.[1]

No bill on the subject was introduced into the legislature, however. The minutes of the Joint Labor Legislative Board for January 26, 1925, show that a letter regarding unemployment insurance was received from President Green, of the American Federation of Labor, but President Walker replied "that he could not approve of the introduction of a State Insurance bill at this time." The injunction-limitation bill had right of way in the session of 1925. The Joint Board resolved that the communication "be placed on file and that we defer further action on the unemployment bill."[2]

At the following convention another O'Fallon delegate brought in a resolution which asked the American Federation of Labor to mobilize all the forces of the labor movement in an attack on unemployment based on the following principles: "1. Industry must maintain its workers . . . . . 2. Nationalization of mines and railroads . . . . . 3. Complete unemployment insurance . . . . . 4. Unity of employed and unemployed . . . . . 5. Control Committees and Shop Councils . . . . . The goal of these committees shall be to establish workers' control of production." This resolution charged the American Federation of Labor with lack of action on the unemployment problem, and was rejected without discussion.[3] A more specific proposal from the Painters' State Conference called for a state commission which should find jobs for unemployed workers at the prevailing rate of wages or provide them with living expenses at the cost of the

[1] *Proc.* (1924), p. 345.

[2] "Minutes of Joint Board," January 26, 1925.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 89–90.

state. This too was rejected, the Chairman of the Committee on Legislation explaining that "if the committee felt there was the slightest hope of passing a bill of the kind suggested they would make a different recommendation, but they had no such hope."[1]

No further action regarding unemployment insurance has been taken by the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

H. OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

In 1923 President Lulay and Secretary Geimer, of the Painters' State Conference, proposed that the State Federation create a committee to make a comprehensive investigation of occupational diseases in the industries of Illinois, as well as the condition of the statute law of the state, and to submit its report to the next convention.[2]

No funds were available for the comprehensive investigation desired, but a committee composed of Guy Young, chairman, Edwin R. Wright, secretary, Joseph W. Morton, Mary McEnerney, Robert C. Pell, Mary Haney, and Barney Cohen set to work without compensation and drafted a very intelligent report for the benefit of the Peoria (1924) convention.[3] The committee quoted from reports of the Illinois Commission on Occupational Diseases which had drafted the law of 1911, from Dr. Alice Hamilton's contribution to the report of the Illinois Health Insurance Commission in 1918, and from Ohio and federal investigations. It reviewed legislation on the subject in Illinois and pointed out that while "we have probably advanced in this state since 1909 in the prevention of accidents and surely so in the compensation of the accidentally injured . . . . we have stood still

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

[2] *Proc.* (1923), p. 448.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 356 f.

as a state in the enactment of law with reference to occupational disease. It's time the situation was changed."

The existing Illinois law was criticized in that it failed to cover certain trades, notably journeymen painters or plumbers working outside of factories, and because it made no provision for reports from physicians not attached to manufacturing plants. The committee agreed with Dr. Hayhurst and other authorities that the proper means of improvement was not the creation of a mass of specific statutes to cover each process in which occupational disease might develop; instead, Illinois must be brought to adopt the Wisconsin plan of specifying by statute that conditions of work shall be "reasonably safe," charging an Industrial Commission to determine from time to time, with the advice of employers, employees, and technical experts, what standards are to be considered "reasonably safe."

The committee also called for more factory inspectors in Illinois and deplored the lack of a statistical division in the Department of Labor. It recommended that the factory inspection department be more closely affiliated with the Industrial Commission so that accident reports might be available for the use of the inspectors.

The committee further remarked that trade unions should study conditions in their own occupations with a view to improvement by collective bargaining. "One of the best sources of improvement can come from education of the workers themselves. Here again the organizations can be effective."

So far the committee had dealt with prevention. On the second phase of the occupational-disease problem, that of relief, it approved the legislative action of 1921 and 1923 which had applied the principle of workmen's compensation to the occupational diseases included in the 1911 act. "Still the bulk of occupational diseases are outside of the Work-

men's Compensation Act." The committee recommended that Illinois adopt the plan suggested by the American Association for Labor Legislation in order to get coverage for occupational diseases; that is, the Workmen's Compensation Act should be amended to read "personal injury" instead of "accidental injury."

Edwin R. Wright gave it as his opinion that this subject was the most important before the convention, "because it deals with human life itself"; and the "masterly report" of the committee, as Delegate Briggs characterized it, was adopted by unanimous vote after being praised by various speakers. The report of this special Committee on Occupational Diseases shows an encouraging tendency on the part of the Federation to study its problems carefully and to frame its legislative program in the light of such study. There is a discouraging aspect in that this report, having been praised and adopted, has apparently been forgotten. The gathering of facts on occupational diseases among the various trades has not been pushed further, and no legislative proposal on the subject has been taken up by the Joint Board. There has been no action on the question of occupational disease in subsequent conventions, and no further report on it by officers or committees. This issue, like others, has fallen by the wayside in the overwhelming concentration of the Federation on injunction legislation and the political activities necessary to obtain it.

I. OLD AGE PENSIONS

The 1914 convention declared that in order to secure lower insurance rates for their responsibilities under the Workmen's Compensation Law many employers were discharging all employees over a certain age and refusing to hire others who failed to pass a physical examination. "We

believe the burden of supporting all such cases should be placed on the industry, inasmuch as such tactics help to swell the unemployed ranks; we firmly believe that the only remedy for such evils is an old age pension fund."[1]

The Joint Board supported a bill for a state old-age pension system in the General Assembly of 1915, and organized labor has promoted similar bills at each session since that time. In recent years the old-age pension bill has come to occupy one of the foremost places on the State Federation's legislative program. "We believe that when a man has given the best years of his life in the industries of this nation for the benefit of society . . . . [and] when he is disabled through old age it is a crime to throw him onto the scrap heap, to go the slow starvation death route," said the convention of 1921.[2]

In the legislature of 1923 the old-age pension bill was pushed by a committee from the international office of the United Mine Workers at Indianapolis, and though there was some friction due to the political situation in the miners' union—the International Union and the Illinois state officers were not on the most friendly terms at the time—the difficulties were smoothed over by the creation of a special subcommittee of the Joint Board to handle old-age pension matters. On it were represented the International Union's committee, the state organization of miners, and the Joint Board. The Fraternal Order of Eagles was also starting a legislative campaign for state old-age pensions, and they were invited to co-operate with organized labor. In fact, the labor group abandoned its own bill and agreed to support the measure drawn by the Eagles' lawyers in order to secure unity in the legislature.[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 202.

[2] *Proc.* (1921), p. 230.

[3] "Minutes of Joint Board," July 31, 1923; "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1923), p. 195.

The bill was brought to third reading in the Senate, but failed to receive a constitutional majority. Following this defeat efforts were redoubled. During 1924 a committee of the Joint Board set to work gathering information and compiling relevant statistics. A questionnaire on the subject was sent to members of the legislature, and secretaries of local unions were asked to discover the attitudes of legislative candidates in their districts. The Illinois Mine Workers had a committee of their own working throughout the year, and copies of their report were distributed to delegates at the State Federation convention and mailed to affiliated unions. President Walker reported that more educational work than ever before was being carried on in order to arouse trade unionists and the public to the importance of old-age pensions.[1]

A redrafted bill, carefully worked over to eliminate technical objections, was introduced in the 1925 legislature but failed to pass. The Civic Federation of Chicago[2] led the fight against it, alleging that it would cost an enormous sum. The General Assembly was bent on achieving a name as an "economy legislature"; and furthermore, other labor bills had to be sidetracked in the supreme effort to secure the enactment of the Injunction-Limitation Law.[3]

The Champaign-Urbana convention (1925) declared that having secured an Injunction-Limitation Law the constantly growing movement for abolition of poor houses and the substitution of old-age pensions should be supported more earnestly than ever. It formally resolved to make the old-age pension bill "labor's important social measure."[4]

[1] "Minutes of Joint Board," June 7, 1923, February 7, 1924, June 17, 1924; *Proc.* (1924), p. 106.

[2] Not connected with the National Civic Federation.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 118, 271.

[4] *Proc.* (1925), p. 118.

Having become the "paramount social measure" of the Federation, the old-age pension proposal was pushed persistently in the 1927 legislature. First it lacked twelve votes in the House. Then a revised bill designed to meet some of the objections urged against the first one was introduced in the Senate. On third reading it needed two more votes, but was saved from defeat by a motion to postpone consideration. The members of the Joint Board arranged a meeting with Governor Small and secured his assistance; the Governor's influence turned the tide, for soon afterward the bill was called up a second time and passed in the Senate. On June 30 it came up for passage in the House, but in spite of the efforts of Representative Soderstrom and the Joint Board only 75 votes—two short of the constitutional majority—were mustered.[1]

Farmers opposed the old-age pension bill in the 1927 General Assembly, not on account of any antagonism against organized labor or the pension proposal itself, but because they would not stand for any increase in taxation. "We are losing our farms, going into bankruptcy by the hundreds and thousands every day," their representatives said. "No matter what the cause for it, every penny of added cost makes the burden that much heavier and ruins more of us."[2]

Insurance companies have opposed state old-age pensions all along; the Chicago Civic Federation and the Illinois Chamber of Commerce worked against the labor bill in 1927. A stock argument against pensions has been that they would cost too much; opponents have charged that $40,000,000 per annum would be required. The estimates presented by the labor group, based on experience in parts of Pennsylvania and elsewhere, were much lower, and the Illinois State Fed-

[1] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1927), pp. 278 f.

[2] "Report of President Walker," *Proc.* (1927), p. 184.

eration argues that the state has to choose between pensions and the poor-house system. The 1927 bill proposed a pension of $260 a year for citizens of the United States over seventy years of age and resident in Illinois for twenty years, the fund to be raised by a one-half mill levy and administered by the Industrial Commission. "It is well known that the cost of maintaining an aged person in a public institution is far in excess of the amount it is proposed to pay such person in the form of a pension."[1]

J. HEALTH INSURANCE; MOTHERS' PENSIONS

In 1917, as a result of a movement inaugurated in this country by the American Association for Labor Legislation, the Illinois General Assembly authorized the appointment of a Health Insurance Commission to study sickness among employees and their families, together with methods of preventing it and meeting its effects. Two labor representatives served on the commission—Matthew Woll, president of the International Photo-Engravers' Union, and Mary McEnerney, secretary of the Chicago Bindery Women's Union.[2] The next convention of the State Federation looked with favor upon the work of the commission and urged that "appropriate legislation be enacted providing for sick wage-earners adequate medical and financial care during incapacity." In the interests of economy, efficiency, and prevention of sickness, private insurance companies for profit should be excluded from participation in health insurance.[3]

The commission made a thorough investigation and submitted a report which ranks among the best studies of sickness and poverty ever made. Though two members wrote a vigorous minority report advocating the immediate

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 486–87; *WN*, March 17, 1923.

[2] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

[3] *Proc.* (1917), p. 255.

adoption of compulsory health insurance in Illinois, the majority was unwilling to approve such a recommendation and suggested instead an extension of health work along existing lines.[1]

In the opinion of many, the investigations of the commission disclosed a clear-cut case for health insurance, in spite of the conclusions of the majority.[2] Among these was Duncan McDonald, who recommended health insurance in his presidential report to the Peoria convention of 1919. "The Workmen's Compensation Act in a measure relieves the distress of the injured, and in case of death provides for the family, but in the event of sickness there is no provision made," he said. Health insurance and an old-age pension system, together with the compensation law, would form a "triple alliance" that might "take from the workers the constant dread of want and the possibility of suffering in the declining years, after having given to society their very best efforts." He suggested that the health insurance bill supported in New York by the New York State Federation of Labor ought to be introduced in Illinois and a vigorous effort made to enact it.[3]

Though President McDonald's report was concurred in, nothing has been done toward carrying out the recommendation for health insurance. "After the unfavorable majority report (of the state commission) and the highly organized 'drive' against compulsory health insurance conducted by the commercial insurance companies and the medical profession . . . . the movement in Illinois quickly died out."[4]

[1] Beckner, *op. cit.*, pp. 483–86. Dr. Alice Hamilton and John E. Ransom were the minority members. Matthew Woll did not participate in determining the conclusions and recommendations of the commission, and neither did Professor H. A. Millis, of the University of Chicago, who directed the investigation.

[2] Cf. Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 485.

[3] *Proc.* (1919), p. 45.

[4] Beckner, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

K. PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

At least sixty resolutions presented by the post-office clerks were adopted during the period from 1914 to 1928, and they related to every subject which a post-office clerk might have on his mind—wages, eight-hour day, night work, sanitary conditions, dismissal for joining the union, hearing of grievances, requesting investigation of postal conditions by the Department of Labor, shorter work week, retirement act and pension fund, censorship of employees' bulletin boards by postal authorities, Sunday collections, Saturday half-holidays, seniority, efficiency ratings described as "a branch of the nefarious Taylor speed-up system," the weighing system, compensation for accidents, etc. The indorsement of the State Federation aided the postal employees when they took their demands to Congress or to the Post-Office Department. In the early years of the period these resolutions appeared in the convention proceedings as "introduced by V. A. Olander, Seamen's Union." This, as Secretary Olander explained, was "to prevent some post office employe being discharged for doing it."[1]

The State Federation of Labor has supported the firemen in their requests for laws authorizing wage increases and pensions; it has favored the eight-hour day for policemen; it has aided employees of state institutions to improve their wages and working conditions, both by assisting them to organize and by seconding their demands before the legislature and the governor; it has co-operated with the teachers' union in its fight for the right to organize, for pension amendments, and for the tax and educational measures advanced by the teachers; it has taken up with the governor, requests for reinstatement of florists discharged by Chicago park

[1] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 257 f.

boards for striking; and in general it has helped organizations of public employees to achieve their objects with the government.[1]

[1] *Proc.* (1920), p. 210; (1926), p. 139; (1927), p. 176; (1919), p. 242; (1914), pp. 11, 190; (1916), pp. 246, 232; (1921), p. 234; (1918), p. 307; (1921), p. 358; (1927), p. 274; also on teachers' union matters, *WN*, 1915, August 28, September 3, September 11, December 11; 1916, May 6, June 24, June 6; 1917, April 21, December 29; 1917, December 29.

CHAPTER XXVIII

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY, 1914–28—*Continued*

II

A. CRAFT PROTECTION

In 1922 the Illinois Manufacturers' Association and the Coal Operators' Association launched an attack against the Miners' Qualification Law. Just after the riot at Herrin they asked Governor Small to call a special session of the legislature to repeal the Qualification Law and to establish a state constabulary. This the governor did not do, but strong efforts were to be made for the same purpose in the regular session in 1923. The State Federation pledged itself to do everything in its power to defend the Qualification Act. Its arguments were put on grounds of safety and protection of human life; President Walker headed his report on the subject, "The Brutality of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association."[1] A bill introduced by Senator Mills in the 1923 General Assembly proposed to alter the composition of the examining boards under the Qualification Law in a way which would prevent the union from controlling them and perhaps might give control to the operators. It also provided that in case of a shortage of coal, and upon proclamation of the governor, the mines might be operated by uncertified miners. The Illinois Mine Workers, aided by the State Federation, were able to accomplish its defeat in both houses.[2]

The Federation was credited by the journeymen barbers with preventing the repeal of the Barbers' License Law during this period, and later the Joint Board helped the

[1] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 142, 415.

[2] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1923), p. 202.

barbers to secure several amendments embodied in an "agreed" bill.[1] The electrical workers also received the co-operation of the Federation and the Joint Board in their campaign for legislative regulation of electrical installation. Two bills were passed in 1927 which provided for an Electrical Commission to set up standards of safety for electrical equipment and to insure the employment of none but competent workers. These were also "agreed" bills, favored by the union and by electrical contractors.[2] The Egg Inspectors' Union obtained an egg-inspection law in 1919, with the aid of the Federation. Mr. John A. Schoonover, representing the craft, also ascribed the defeat of a hostile amendment introduced by the "egg manipulators" in 1923 to the assistance of the Federation. "The Legislative Committee of the Illinois State Federation gave us as much time as though we were miners or teamsters with all their thousands of members affiliated with the Federation," he said.[3]

The railroad workers have been aided by the Federation for a number of years in their efforts to secure the enactment of bills requiring full crews on freight trains and limiting the length of trains to one-half mile.[4] At the instance of the street-railway employees and the teamsters (truck-drivers), the State Federation has favored the abolition of one-man street cars and regulation of the size and weight of trucks.[5] The Actors' Equity Association secured the support of the State Federation against discriminatory taxation of tent dramatic shows levied in some localities and against censorship of theatrical productions. Frank R. Dare, of the Actors'

[1] *Proc.* (1915), p. 164; (1916), p. 242; (1921), p. 225; (1927), pp. 182, 274.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 272, 177.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), p. 429.

[4] *Proc.* (1920), p. 212; (1921), pp. 147 f.; (1923), p. 178; and subsequent reports of the Joint Board.

[5] *Proc.* (1920), p. 208; (1925), p. 113; (1926), p. 138.

Equity, said in 1927 that three censorship bills had been defeated in committee at the last legislative session, "through the efforts of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and through their efforts solely."[1]

The Federation and the Illinois Mine Workers brought about the creation of the "Buy-Illinois-Products Commission" by legislative enactment in 1927 as part of the campaign of organized labor to prevent the undercutting of the wages of Illinois union miners by the competition of non-union coal from Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Since Illinois coal fields are thoroughly organized, "Buy Illinois Coal" is equivalent to "Buy Union Label Goods." Delegate Bogaske said in explaining the act to the 1927 convention:

> Of course you cannot go to a state legislature and limit all purchases entirely to union-made products, but we could and did urge that the state make official efforts to obtain preference for Illinois products. As a result our state has set up a commission, the purpose of which is to promote the sale of Illinois products, with the particular purpose to devote a major part of the time of the commission to promoting the sale and use of Illinois coal.

This commission, composed of nine persons appointed by the governor and serving without compensation, was granted an appropriation of $10,000 to carry on its work. One of its members, according to the law, must be "an official of a state-wide federation of labor."[2]

B. CONVICT LABOR

The State Federation of Labor has retained a standing committee on convict labor at its annual conventions; has been on guard against the establishment of new prison industries to compete on the market with free labor; and

[1] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 137–38.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), p. 81.

particularly has opposed any return toward the contract system. In 1923 a shirt factory was being installed at Pontiac; two hundred machines with tables, shafting, and motors had even been shipped, and but for the State Federation this factory would have opened under a contract with the Reliance Manufacturing Company.[1] The broom-makers were successful in 1915, with the aid of the Chicago and State Federations, in having broom-making discontinued at Joliet—an object which they had sought for twenty-one years.[2]

President Walker reported to the convention of 1916 that he needed a "clear, clean-cut statement" of the Federation's position on convict labor so that he could be guided by it in the future. During the last year three different organizations had complained to him. In one instance convicts were making roads, and the steam-shovel and dredgemen complained; again they were painting the penitentiary, and the painters complained; another time they were building a new state institution, and the structural iron-workers complained. But, said Walker, many trade unionists were under the impression that the state should have the right to employ convicts on roadwork and in the production of things to be used by the state itself and not sold in competition with free labor. What were the officers to do in such circumstances?

A Special Committee which the Executive Board had created some months in advance of the convention supplied the statement of policy desired by the president: (1) The prisoner must be employed; (2) he must be employed productively; (3) he must not be exploited for private profit or in unfair competition with free labor. Recognizing the interests of (1) the state, (2) the prisoner and his family, and

[1] *Proc.* (1924), p. 377, report of Convict Labor Committee.

[2] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 77, 326.

(3) free labor and employers, this committee declared that the best system of employment for prisoners would include some combination of the following:

1st. Work on the public highways which would not otherwise be undertaken with free labor, such as road building, irrigation and tree planting.

2nd. A penal farm, the products thereof not to be sold on the open market, but to the penal, reformatory, and charitable institutions at a fair price.

3rd. Prison industries conducted within the prison walls, the products not to be sold on the open market, but to the various state institutions and departments at a fair market price, the profits from such sale, over and above the cost of maintenance, to be devoted to the support of the prisoner's family or to be funded for the prisoners themselves.

The committee also recommended repeal of the clause in the existing law which permitted 40 per cent of the products produced by prison labor to be sold on the open market, and it urged that all convict-made goods shipped into Illinois and sold should be required to bear a label "Prison Made."[1]

This statement of policy was adopted by the convention and reaffirmed by two subsequent conventions;[2] it expresses the attitude of the Federation today.

The State Federation of Labor has always stood for humane treatment of prisoners. In 1919 it entered a vigorous protest against brutality at Joliet, demanding removal of the warden, whose ideas of prison management were denounced as fifty or a hundred years behind the times. The Convict Labor Committee reported to the next convention that its protests had resulted in many changes for the better. The Federation has repeatedly indorsed recommendations of its president that convicts should have the full value of their labor placed to the credit of themselves or their families, that they should have the most safe, sanitary, and healthful

[1] *Proc.* (1916), pp. 129–30.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), p. 312; (1918), pp. 287–88.

surroundings, and that they "should be made to feel that society is sorry for them, sympathizes with them and wants to help them rather than to take advantage of them and to injure them."[1]

In 1924 the American Federation of Labor held a conference on the problem of convict labor, and later drafted a model bill to provide for the state-use system. The Illinois State Federation introduced this bill into the legislature in 1927, along with a bill for the labeling of prison-made goods, but both were defeated.[2] The chief source of complaint now is that Illinois, and particularly Chicago, is used as a dumping-ground for cheap products produced in the penal institutions of other states; hence, the Federation desires a federal law to prevent shipment of convict-made goods in interstate commerce, or at least to require them to be labeled.[3]

C. IMMIGRATION AND ALIEN LABOR

The Illinois State Federation has left these issues to the American Federation of Labor, expressing itself only once during the period since 1914. In 1920 it favored substitution of a Japanese exclusion law for the Gentlemen's Agreement and restriction of all immigration during the period of reconstruction.[4]

III

That labor has more to gain by straight trade-union action and collective bargaining on the economic field than through legal enactment has been a characteristic feeling of

[1] *Proc.* (1919), pp. 260 f.; (1920), p. 243; (1924), p. 98.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 75, 119, 222, 281. The full text of the model state use bill is in *Proc.* (1926), pp. 63–73.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), p. 378.

[4] *Proc.* (1920), p. 286.

the labor movement throughout this period since 1914. Direct reform by legislation, such as legal regulation of the workday and work week, state action against unsafe or unsanitary working conditions, or social insurance, may be important, but it is held to be secondary. The paramount issues in organized labor's political activities have been those relating to the strength of its economic weapons. Freedom from governmental restraint, whether by statute law, injunction writs, or military police, has been the chief aim of its legislative program.

A. LEGAL STATUS OF TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR METHODS

The conspiracy law of Illinois came to the attention of the trade-union movement in 1922 when William F. Quesse and nine other members of the Chicago Flat Janitors' Union were convicted under it. In 1924 President Walker reported this conviction and the subsequent pardon obtained from Governor Small as "one of the outstanding things that occurred during the past year"; and the Legislative Committee recommended that every effort be made to have the law amended "so that no men or women can be indicted or prosecuted under its provisions, for a collective effort to improve their working conditions."[1]

Accordingly, the trades dispute bill was introduced. It provided that any act in furtherance of a trade dispute between employers and workmen should not be indictable as a conspiracy if the act were not punishable when committed by one person only. The language was adapted from the British Trades Dispute Act of 1906. The bill died in committee in 1925 and again in 1927; it was evident from

[1] The flat janitors were indicted for many other offenses, including various kinds of extortion and violence, but their conviction came on a count charging conspiracy to boycott.—*Proc.* (1924), pp. 107, 434.

the start that no action could be expected upon bills of this character until after the State Supreme Court had rendered a decision on the Injunction Limitation Act, and its decision did not appear until toward the close of the General Assembly's session in 1927. The Joint Board now ranks the trades dispute bill among the first measures on the labor program; it is "an exceedingly important issue which should be kept before the law-making body of the state until it is favorably acted upon."[1]

In 1921 the State Federation opposed an antitrust bill introduced by Senator Essington. At first there was some division among members of the Joint Board as to whether or not they ought to stand out against this measure, which was designed to prevent certain alleged improper business practices in Chicago. Secretary Olander took the responsibility, however, and wrote a signed article in the *News Letter* against the proposed antitrust law; he did not want a state edition of the Sherman Act.[2] Again in 1923 organized labor opposed several restraint-of-trade bills. Though not defending many of the practices which it was the object of such acts to reach, the Federation held that

> experience with this kind of legislation, as interpreted by the courts, has taught us that it is seldom, if ever, applied to the great rich corporations which have secured a monopoly of and control the necessities of life, but it is invariably used as a means to persecute labor organizations and to restrict them in their normal activities.[3]

The story of the suability bill, the "unwarranted industrial warfare" and antipicketing bills, and other hostile measures promoted by employers' associations during the after-war reaction has been told in a previous chapter.

[1] *Proc.* (1925), p. 252; (1927), p. 277.

[2] *WN*, May 28, 1921; interview, V. A. Olander.

[3] *Proc.* (1923), p. 201.

B. THE INJUNCTION IN LABOR DISPUTES

See chapter XXVI.

C. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

While the Kansas Industrial Court was attracting the attention of the country, the Illinois State Federation of Labor passed vigorous resolutions denouncing it and the principle of compulsory arbitration as "industrial slavery."[1] The Federation even refused, in 1915, to indorse a resolution presented by a group of cigar-makers urging generous co-operation between organized labor and the State Board of Arbitration which it had helped to create twenty years before.[2]

D. REGULATION OF DISPUTES

Several times the Federation has demanded laws to restrict the employment of special officers under the pay of corporations in time of strike.[3] It would like to have a law to prohibit the importation of strike-breakers from outside the state, but remembering the fate of the Tanner Act it regards efforts in that direction as hopeless; the Supreme Court would probably hold such a statute unconstitutional.[4]

In 1917 Edward Nockels, of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and other delegates entered a protest concerning a new penal bond law passed by the last legislature; they

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 260; (1922), p. 410.

[2] *Proc.* (1915). The Resolutions Committee, through Chairman Matthew Woll, said that it approved of arbitration, but was not in accord with enforcing any arbitration procedure which might conflict with the rules of international unions. It held that organized labor had co-operated with the State Board of Arbitration in the past better than had the employers; therefore, there was no need to adopt such a resolution.

[3] *Proc.* (1914), p. 250; (1926), pp. 103–6.

[4] *Proc.* (1914), p. 262; (1926), p. 102.

maintained that it would be used unfairly for further discrimination against trade unionists arrested and taken from the picket line. President Walker explained that the Federation's representatives had gone as far as they dared in opposing the law in the General Assembly and that he would go out of his way to get it repealed if he ever had a chance; but organized labor could not come out openly against a provision to guarantee honest bonds, even if they knew it would be administered unfairly. "Our enemies have enough clubs and ammunition without handing them anything in addition." Secretary Olander pointed out that the regulation of penal bonds had a much wider application than labor controversies, since it applied to burglars, pickpockets, and criminals of all kinds. After discussion the entire question was left to the Executive Board.[1]

STATE CONSTABULARY OR MILITARY POLICE

The hardest defensive battle waged by the State Federation of Labor in the legislature during the last ten years has been to resist persistent efforts for the establishment of a state constabulary or military police force in Illinois. The Federation first declared itself on the subject in 1918, alleging that powerful business interests were attempting to secure a state constabulary, that in states where such agencies already existed they were composed largely of thugs and ex-convicts who would not stop at law violation or brutality but even murdered defenseless women and children, and that the history of constabulary organizations showed they were invariably used to crush labor.[2] Senator Dunlap and Representative Castle introduced a constabulary proposal into the General Assembly of 1919 in language almost

[1] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 185–92.

[2] *Proc.* (1918), p. 319.

identical with that of bills being pushed in other states, and the *News Letter* was full of articles against this infamous "Cossack Bill." "It is evident that the only reason a state constabulary is desired is to throttle the growing power of the trade-union movement," and attention was called to Pennsylvania where "even now it is impossible for American Federation of Labor organizers to rent halls in McKeesport . . . . for the purpose of organizing the steel workers." State militias and private gunmen working in the service of industrial corporations had been discredited, and now a new system for oppressing labor was to be evolved, said the Federation.[1]

At hearings in the Senate Chamber in March, 1919, John H. Walker, Frank G. Purtill, representing the State Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen, W. W. Carroll, of Peoria, representing the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors, and John L. Lewis, representing the United Mine Workers, appeared against the bill. Captain L. S. Pitcher, of the Pennsylvania state constabulary, and legislators sponsoring the measure spoke in its favor; during the heated debate it was brought out that the Anti-Saloon League and the War Veterans' Alliance were for a state constabulary. A book entitled *Justice to All*, written by Miss Katherine Mayo, who has been lately known to fame as the author of *Mother India*, appeared on the desk of each senator. The volume attempted to demonstrate the need for a state police force and painted glowing pictures of the deeds done by state constabularies. Questioning by members of the Senate as to who was paying for its free distribution failed to yield any information; even Senator Dunlap avowed he did not know. President James Maurer, of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor, wrote that someone had been sending free copies of Miss Mayo's book to each assemblyman and

[1] *WN*, March 8, 1919.

senator wherever a constabulary bill was introduced, and that his organization stood ready to prove that it was full of untruths and distortion. He sent a copy of a publication which gave the history of the Pennsylvania constabulary from labor's viewpoint.[1]

The Illinois State Federation of Labor gathered many petitions and resolutions from its affiliated organizations in opposition to the constabulary bill. Many newspapers over the state objected to it, holding that it would not only interfere with local self-government, but that it was unnecessary and wasteful. It was argued that a constabulary was necessary to protect the rural districts, but organized labor pointed out that its support came from manufacturers and corporations in the cities. On roll call in the Senate, the constabulary bill met defeat by 16 yeas to 31 nays.[2]

The bill introduced in 1921 was much more drastic than that of the previous session. It went even further than the Pennsylvania law, and was branded by organized labor as "the most viciously anti-American proposal ever submitted to an American legislature." It proposed to set up a military force of from 200 to 450 men under the command of a chief appointed for life and subject to dismissal only on the grounds of incompetency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office. These state troopers were to be provided not only with the ordinary police authority to serve warrants and to arrest for offenses committed in their presence but also to arrest on suspicion without a warrant. The commander was to have arbitrary power over his subordinates to promote, demote, or dismiss at will, and State Federation officials asserted that the bill conferred upon him almost unlimited authority to "invade" with his force any community of the

[1] *WN*, March 15, 1919.

[2] *WN*, May 17, 1919.

state, urban as well as rural, at any time and for any purpose, and even to take over the functions of the civil authorities. "In effect, the bill proposed to place the entire state under martial law with the civil authorities always subordinate to the military commander," said the Joint Labor Legislative Board.[1]

The military police idea, or the movement for its widespread adoption in the United States, seems to have originated in Detroit; it was carried on largely by the military police officers themselves—those from Pennsylvania, Michigan, New York, and other states where the system had been established. The sources of support for the campaign were always more or less mysterious. In Illinois it was promoted by an "anonymous group of publicity agents styling themselves 'The State Police Auxiliary Committee,'" which consisted of "five or six men, all of whom are practically unknown in the public and business life of the state." They went about collecting money for their operations from bankers, business men, and manufacturers. John M. Glenn, of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, admitted in public debate with Mr. Olander that the constabulary proposal had not originated among the manufacturers or bankers of the state, but had been conceived by this self-appointed committee, who had used it as a means by which to obtain financial contributions from business firms. He agreed that they had handed the business men of the state "a lot of bunk" and that the business men had "fallen for it."[2] The constabulary campaign took advantage of the military psychology produced in the United States by the war (a war to stamp out militarism, supposedly!), and also prospered under the influence of the peculiar class fear rampant in some quarters after the war. This, it must be remembered,

[1] *Proc.* (1921), p. 167.

[2] *WN*, April 9, 1921; *Proc.* (1921), p. 169; interview, V. A. Olander.

was the era of "Red" raids, deportations, and the Bolshevist hysteria.

As a prelude to the introduction of the military police bill in 1921, an extensive advertising campaign was carried on in Illinois for more effective policing of rural highways. Secretary Olander, in an able exposition of the provisions of the bill, showed that, instead of a rural police permanently stationed in rural communities, it actually provided for a military force organized for quick mobilization. There were only vague and general allusions in the text to rural protection; the superintendent of state police was not directed to establish either stations or substations in the various counties nor upon the rural highways. He was simply to establish such stations as he might think necessary.

> The military police idea developed within the cities and not in the farming communities. Those who are promoting the bill have their headquarters in Chicago, on LaSalle street, in the heart of the stock and bond selling district. It is . . . . fathered by the powerful corporate interests that have caused the introduction of similar military police bills in other states.

It is a move to "destroy local self-government throughout America," and to raise up an army separated entirely from the people "in order that it may be used against the people."[1]

The bill did contain a provision that "the Illinois State Police shall not enter upon duty for the purpose of policing a strike, except by order of the Governor, or upon the request of the mayor of a city or the sheriff of a county, approved by the Governor." But organized labor contended that this would prove meaningless, for who is to say when the troopers are "policing a strike" and when they are merely exercising their powers to arrest anyone on suspicion of wrongdoing? When Secretary Olander was asked what changes in that particular section would make it satisfactory to organized

[1] Pamphlet by Victor A. Olander on military police bill, issued by Illinois State Federation of Labor in 1921.

labor he resented the implication "that working people were not expected to have any thought beyond work and wages." In these days, he pointed out, working people are citizens with full rights and responsibilities, and "even if a clause were inserted absolutely prohibiting the troopers from performing strike duty of any kind . . . . we would still oppose the bill, because it is dangerous to civil liberty."[1]

At the hearings on March 16, 1921, Representative Castle opened for the advocates of the bill; Mr. M. A. Grittinger, representing the Illinois Bankers' Association, urged its enactment as a protection against bank robberies; Mr. S. H. Thorpe, claiming to represent the agricultural associations of the state, supported the measure as a protection to farmers in the isolated districts; he was followed by Mr. Charles W. Schuck, representing the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. John H. Walker and Victor A. Olander led the opposition, aided by Dennis J. McCarthy, secretary of the Joint Board, and by representatives of the railway brotherhoods, the United Mine Workers, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the Springfield Federation of Labor.[2]

The House Committee on Efficiency and Economy recommended that the bill "do not pass," and this report was adopted without contest. Then advocates of a constabulary measure pressed it in the Senate, where it was subjected to a vigorous debate on the floor, put to a roll call on third reading, and failed to receive a sufficient number of affirmative votes.[3]

The State Police Auxiliary Committee started another publicity campaign almost immediately after the close of the 1921 session. Lectures and moving pictures were used all

[1] *WN*, April 23, 1921.

[2] *WN*, March 16, 1921.

[3] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1921), pp. 167–69. The roll call showed 24 affirmative votes and 23 negative; 26 votes were necessary for passage.

over the state in an effort to create favorable sentiment, and there was another strenuous battle when the General Assembly met in 1923. While the bill was pending before the Senate, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce sent out a circular which urged business interests to put pressure upon senators for its passage. This circular listed the American Legion as one of the organizations in favor of a state constabulary. The Illinois State Federation of Labor brought the matter to the attention of Legion officers, who promptly furnished an authoritative telegram from the state headquarters at Bloomington denying that their executive committee had ever indorsed the bill as stated by the Chamber of Commerce. A copy of this telegram was placed on the desk of every senator and helped to bring about the defeat of the constabulary measure. The final roll call in the Senate at this session showed 23 yeas and 25 nays.[1]

Early in 1924 a committee from the Executive Board of the Illinois State Federation of Labor met in conference with representatives of the Bankers' Association, the Illinois Agricultural Association, and the State Chamber of Commerce, at the request of the latter organizations, and the proposal for a constabulary was discussed at considerable length.

The discussion left the impression on the minds of the members of the Executive Board of the Illinois State Federation of Labor that these organizations were not in favor of the vicious things that, in our judgment, the proposed Military Police bill meant, and that it was possible that an agreement might be reached on some different arrangement that would furnish protection for rural districts and other sections of the state . . . . without the enactment of such a measure, which had in it so much possibility of danger.[2]

[1] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1923), p. 196.

[2] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 174–75.

No agreement was reached, however, and in 1925 the Dunlap bill came before the legislature again. This time it passed the Senate, but was defeated in the House.[1] In 1927 Senator Dunlap once more presented the same bill which he had proposed in every session of the legislature since 1919, and withdrew it when he found it had no chance to pass.[2]

The co-operation of Governor Small was an important factor without which the State Federation of Labor might not have been able to stop the constabulary bill during all these years. His friendliness on this issue, combined with his support of the injunction limitation bills and other labor projects, earned him the backing of the Federation in his political campaigns.

During the 1923 session, a bill prepared under the direction of the governor and providing for 120 "hard-roads policemen" was passed, with the approval of organized labor. These were made responsible to the state executive in the same manner as other public employees. In 1925 a bill introduced by Senator Barr, on behalf of the governor, proposed to increase the number of these police and to give them the powers of ordinary police officers in the state. President Walker argued that with the establishment of central identification bureaus and telephone stations this force would give adequate protection on the highways and meet the demands of many who asked for a constabulary. Proponents of the military police system succeeded in amending the bill in the Senate, however, so that it was little different from the Dunlap proposal, and it was killed in the Industrial Affairs Committee of the House.[3]

[1] "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1925), p. 248.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 181, 284–85.

[3] *WN*, April 18, 1925; "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1925), p. 248.

IV

A. BALLOT REFORM

The Federation continued its indorsement of the movement for women's suffrage.[1]

In 1924 it declared, "The primary ballot ought to be so arranged that a citizen could be privileged to vote for any candidate on any ticket, regardless of party. . . . ."[2] The Joint Board was instrumental in securing the passage of a Judicial Primary Law for Cook County in the legislature of 1925, and the State Federation retained Senator James Hamilton Lewis and Thomas C. Spelling to defend it and the general primary law against attack in the courts. Both the judicial and the general primary laws were held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Illinois, nevertheless.[3] Then the Federation worked for the enactment of a new law drawn up by the governor, and it was passed in 1927. "Organized labor stands squarely for the integrity of the primary election system," said the Joint Board on the eve of a special legislative session called in 1928 when it seemed likely that still another statute would have to be passed to remove legal difficulties blocking the state election machinery.

> The primary system, even in its most imperfect form, is as much preferable to the convention method of selecting candidates for public office as light in public affairs is preferable to darkness and secrecy. . . . We feel it is of special importance that the candidates for judges of our courts should be selected at a direct primary. . . . .[4]

The judicial primary law declared unconstitutional after its enactment in 1925 has not been revived, however. The Joint Board decided that since there was so much difficulty

[1] *Proc.* (1917), p. 295.

[2] *Proc.* (1924), p. 434.

[3] *Proc.* (1925), p. 141; (1926), p. 30; (1927), p. 276.

[4] *WN*, January 21, 1928.

in establishing the general law, that relating to the judiciary should be dropped for the time being.[1]

The Federation of Labor has strongly urged the legislature to comply with the constitution of the state by reapportioning representation in the General Assembly according to the latest census of population; labor is particularly interested because it is the rapidly growing industrial districts which are under represented.[2]

B. INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM, RECALL

In 1914, on the recommendation of the American Federation of Labor, the Illinois State Federation of Labor voted to affiliate with the National Popular Government League. It has continued to favor the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, though these demands have not been prominent since the failure to achieve the desired results through a constitutional convention.[3]

C. THE LEGISLATURE

President Walker's report on the legislative situation in 1915 read:

> If there are two bills that labor wants . . . . and they are introduced into both Houses, the House will pass one of the bills . . . . and kill the other. The Senate will pass the bill which the House killed, and kill the one which the House passed; so that both measures are killed and the records of the Senators and Representatives show that they favor one measure, while they were opposed to the other. And they use this situation to create the impression that they did as much for labor as they did against it, when in reality they deliberately, by agreement, planned to and killed all labor measures.

[1] Interview, V. A. Olander.

[2] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 120, 274.

[3] See *Proc.* (1914), p. 185; (1919), pp. 41, 47 and chapters on the Labor party and the Constitutional Convention in this text.

In my judgment, one House is all that is necessary as a law-making body. It will simplify matters; it will make it easier for the people to locate responsibility . . . . and will make it much easier to bring direct influence to bear on their representatives by the people of the state.

Walker's recommendation was "that agitation should be started through every organization in our state for the purpose of eliminating the Senate (our State House of Lords)." The convention indorsed his views.[1]

Two years later the convention again voted that the Illinois Senate should be abolished and a one-house legislature established in its place; it also recommended that the American Federation of Labor work for the abolition of the United States Senate, though opinion on this matter was divided, since there was some justification for the national Senate as a protection to small states.[2]

On the Illinois constitutional requirement that bills must obtain the affirmative vote of a majority of the elected members of each House in the legislature before becoming law, regardless of whether anyone votes against them or not, the Federation also spoke its mind. When that system was adopted years ago, said Secretary Olander, it is possible that many earnest men felt that the best rule was to require the entire House and Senate to act upon all questions, in order to prevent domination by cliques. But the present effect was that "bills are defeated on the floor of the legislature without a single vote against them," and reactionary members "are able to put themselves on record as favoring progressive legislation without any chance of that legislation passing."[3]

[1] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 51, 214.

[2] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 192–203.

[3] *Proc.* (1917), p. 200. "A bill is introduced in the House," explained Duncan McDonald. "There are 153 members there. If 76 of those members vote for that bill and not one member votes against it the bill is killed because we did not get a majority of the votes in the House. Introduce a bill in the House, and every member in the House votes for it, 153. Go over to the Senate and there are 51 members there . . . . and 25 senators vote for it. Not a single one votes against it, and yet

The legislative influence of the State Federation of Labor depends largely upon its ability to force members of the General Assembly out into the open where they must commit themselves definitely for or against labor's measures. No wonder, then, that it protests against these quirks in the legislative machinery which permit legislators to "juggle the records" and cover up their real sympathies. It is also easy to understand why such reforms as the Federation suggests have made no headway, for the typical state legislator is not noted for his love of open, clear-cut stands on issues.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

The Civil Code Bill, enacted in 1917, consolidated the hundred or more boards and commissions of the state government into nine departments, of which two—the Department of Labor and the Department of Mines and Minerals—deal directly with labor and labor laws. The Joint Board favored the principle of the code, but confined its activities on the proposition in the legislature to "watching it" and preventing the inclusion of new legislation inimical to labor.[1]

In the process of reorganization, however, the old Bureau of Labor Statistics was abolished and no provision was made under the new law for centralized collection and compilation of statistical data. Owing largely to the efforts of Mr. R. D. Cahn, who joined the staff of the Illinois Department of Labor in 1921, this defect has been remedied. The Illinois State Federation of Labor assisted him in getting an appropriation through the legislature in 1925.[2]

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it is killed." And of the 26 senators who by being "absent or not voting" defeated the labor measure, "every one . . . . can prove he had a mother ill, a grandmother ill, some important business engagement, or the train was delayed . . . . or he would have been there to vote for the bill."—*Proc.* (1917), pp. 194–95.

[1] *Proc.* (1917), p. 86; interview, Victor A. Olander.

[2] See Beckner, *op. cit.*, 426–27.

E. THE COURTS

The attitude of the State Federation toward the practice of the courts in injunction cases has been sufficiently indicated elsewhere. It also indorsed LaFollette's program, which included limitation of the power of the judiciary to hold legislative acts unconstitutional.

The Illinois Federation has urged trade unionists to accept jury duty, and has favored increased pay for jury service so that workmen might serve without loss of wages. It even suggested in 1925 that trade unions might adopt the policy of paying members the difference between their regular wages and the compensation received for jury service.[1]

A measure known as the Jury Commissioners' Bill, applying only to Cook County, passed the legislature in 1923 before labor became aware of its contents. It provided that the jury commissioners should compile a jury list containing 10 per cent of the electors in the county, and from this 10 per cent the names for both the petit and grand jury boxes should be drawn. The Chicago and State Federations immediately asked for a hearing before Governor Small and urged him to veto it, which he did. Incorporating the labor arguments in his veto message, the governor pointed out that the 10 per cent list might be selected from any class of people, to the exclusion of other classes. It was generally admitted, however, and the governor said as much in his message, that the existing system for selecting jurymen was unsatisfactory. He expressed the hope that conferences would follow between interested parties and that an agreement might be reached on amendments to the law. The

[1] *Proc.* (1923); (1925), p. 198.

State Federation, through the *News Letter*, expressed the same hope, but nothing resulted.[1]

V

A. PUBLIC EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

Several converging lines of interest have combined to cause the labor movement of Illinois to concern itself earnestly and continuously with the public-school policies of the state. (1) The workingman is interested in a good education for his children. (2) The trade-union movement is interested in the viewpoints imparted to children in the schools, particularly in their attitudes toward organized labor and its program. (3) Trade unions are interested in vocational education which affects the labor supply of various crafts. (4) Certain crafts are interested in phases of school administration because the schools consume a large amount of their products; for example, the printers are greatly interested in textbooks, and especially whether they are to be made by union or non-union labor. (5) The teachers have a vital interest in school laws and administration, as well as a technical knowledge of educational affairs; their affiliation with organized labor during this period has caused the State Federation to devote more attention to school matters than ever before.

Since 1915, when the teachers were fighting for the right to organize, and when it was reported that great commercial interests were menacing the public schools through their attempts to control educational policy, particularly in the field of vocational education, the Illinois State Federation has had a standing Committee on Schools. For several years, under

[1] *Proc.* (1923), p. 63; *WN*, April 20, 1923, May 5, 1923. Practically the same bill was introduced in 1927, but died in committee.—Interview, Miss Halo Hibbard; legislative digest in *WN*, April 2, 1927.

the chairmanship of Matthew Woll, this committee presented comprehensive and well-organized reports to each convention. Today the Federation depends largely for its guidance on school matters upon the Illinois State Teachers' Association, whose secretary, Robert C. Moore, has been a fraternal delegate at its conventions since 1915, upon officials of the teachers' unions, such as James Meade, Margaret Haley, Mrs. Florence Curtis Hanson, and F. G. Stecker, and upon Secretary Olander, who is deeply interested in everything pertaining to the schools.

FREE TEXTBOOKS

The convention of 1914 rejected the arguments of Edwin R. Wright and decided that free textbooks were much more important to workingmen than state uniformity and state-owned copyrights. For the next few years it advocated "uniform, free textbooks," with the emphasis on free, thus reviving the demand which the printers had persuaded it to drop a few years earlier.[1] In 1918 the Schools Committee eliminated the specific reference to uniformity, because it felt that the vital matter was free textbooks. Five years later some delegates wished again to include a demand for state uniformity and a state-owned copyright, arguing that mine-workers had to purchase an entirely new set of books when a mine closed down and they moved from one district to another; but it was pointed out that a free textbook system would do away with this difficulty. Secretary Olander remarked further that he had consulted with prominent educators on the subject, and invariably their opinion was that a sort of stagnation results under uniform state-wide selection of schoolbooks; he said there was a grave fear lest

[1] *Proc.* (1914), p. 191; (1917), p. 183; (1918), p. 222.

complete uniformity might interfere with experimentation and the proper education of the children.[1]

In 1919 the legislature passed a law making it optional with the districts whether or not they would furnish free schoolbooks. Since then the State Federation has sought, unsuccessfully, to have the law made mandatory. It has done much, however, toward securing a wide application of the optional statute. It had copies of the free textbook law printed in leaflet form, and by means of resolutions and speeches at the convention, articles in the *News Letter*, and personal assistance from its officers, the Federation encouraged local unions and central bodies to raise the issue in their communities. Secretary Olander was able to inform the Peoria convention in 1924 that "probably more than half the children of the state of Illinois now have the privilege of free textbooks," and "the demand for information from my office is increasing."[2]

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A special committee under the chairmanship of Victor A. Olander studied the problem of vocational education in 1914 and submitted a report which showed a care and thoroughness unusual in State Federation committee work prior to that time.[3] It was heartily in favor of instruction in vocational subjects, but sounded a warning against any plan that would divide the children into separate and distinct groups

[1] *Proc.* (1923), p. 462.

[2] *Proc.* (1924), p. 418; (1923), p. 461; *WN*, December 1, 1923, August 9, 1924.

[3] See *Proc.* (1914), pp. 45–54. The committee secured the co-operation of well-informed people outside the labor movement in formulating its conclusions; the report was signed as follows: V. A. Olander, chairman; Matthew Woll, secretary; C. J. Anderson; Ella Flagg Young (then superintendent of the Chicago schools); H. H. Stoek; Mrs. Raymond Robins; John Carroll; Agnes Nestor; Charles D. Wheeler; Clayton Pense; William Neer; James McAndrews; Tony Weth; Duncan McDonald.

on economic lines. The so-called "dual system" of school administration being advocated in Illinois at the time, a proposal to place vocational education under the direction of a board of management entirely distinct from the board governing the general education of the children, was emphatically condemned. Vocational education should at all times be under the control of the general education authorities.

The recommendations of this committee to the convention included:

1. Compulsory school attendance of all children between the ages of seven and sixteen.

2. (*a*) Authorization to all school districts in the state to provide instruction in vocational subjects.

(*b*) Increased financial assistance from the state for districts making such provision.

(*c*) Administration of vocational courses by the same board of education administering general education.

(*d*) Appointment of advisory committees in each district maintaining vocational education, these committees to consist of an equal number of employers and members of bona fide labor organizations.

(*e*) Vocational education should include the teaching of the sciences underlying the various industries and industrial pursuits being taught, and their historical, economic and social bearings.

(*f*) (*g*) Provision that boards of education be informed by employers of the hiring or discharge of all persons under eighteen years of age, together with information regarding conditions of employment, opportunities for acquiring skill, etc.; such information to be published and copies sent to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

3. To protect against fraud and misrepresentation, all private trade schools conducted for profit should be subject to inspection by the board of education.

4, 5. Employment of legal counsel and legislative efforts on the part of the State Federation of Labor to carry these recommendations into effect.

6. Commendation of the vocational courses and other educational activities conducted by trade unions.

In accordance with these principles, the State Federation helped in the 1915 legislature to kill the Cooley bill for vocational education which President Walker said would have established the "dual system" desired by interests that "want to use our schools as a training place for turning out a plentiful supply of the most highly skilled industrial workers with the least possible amount of other knowledge necessary to enable them to protect themselves, and with their minds trained and developed in such a manner as to make of them willing scabs."[1] There was a deadlock in the 1917 legislature between those who wanted vocational education controlled by the existing boards of education and those who insisted upon separate control; but in 1919 a satisfactory bill was passed which left the management to the general boards and appropriated $400,000 to match the federal grant to Illinois under the Smith-Hughes plan. The same legislature also passed bills introduced by Representative Soderstrom and others to provide for part-time continuation schools. Thus, the principle for which organized labor had contended was triumphant.[2]

The Federation has maintained a close watch on developments in vocational education, announcing that merchants and manufacturers who have the idea that vocational and continuation schools are instituted to train workers for them "should be given to understand that the schools, all of them, are for the benefit of the child . . . . and that benefits to the business interests are incidental." "The demand for any particular course should come from the children or their

[1] *Proc.* (1915), pp. 72–74. C. E. Bonnett, in his book on *Employers' Associations in the United States* (Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 119, records: "In order that the unions might not monopolize so easily the supply of skilled laborers, and thus coerce the employer to grant all unions demands, the Association [National Metal Trades Association] has also advocated legislation for the establishment of industrial education in the public schools."

[2] *Proc.* (1917), p. 126; (1919), p. 99.

parents and not from the firms or individuals seeking to be benefitted."

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS, PLATOON SYSTEM, INTELLIGENCE TESTS

Secretary Olander sees in the junior high school movement a successor to the old effort to set up a "dual" system of education designed to shunt the children of the workers into industry at an early age while the children of the rich go on through high school and college. The "work-study-play" plan, or "platoon school," he condemns as an outgrowth of the Gary system and an attempt to factory-ize the elementary school. The intelligence test is feared as an instrument for imposing a rigid caste system. The State Federation in 1924 indorsed Mr. Olander's position on these modern developments in education, though not all trade-union leaders have agreed on the subject, and agitation of the issue has died down since then.[1]

One may criticize some of these conclusions and compare them to the early trepidation of parts of the organized-labor movement when kindergartens were first introduced;[2] per-

[1] *Proc.* (1924), pp. 185–86, 422. For articles by Mr. Olander setting forth his views see *WN*, April 12, April 26, July 26, 1924, and October 31, 1925. The latter is a speech delivered at the American Federation of Labor convention in Atlantic City. The educational committee of the American Federation of Labor, of which Matthew Woll was chairman, reported that the labor movement should watch these educational movements, but that evidence regarding them was conflicting and they should not be condemned outright. Secretary Olander, a delegate from the Seamen's Union, secured introduction of a report which made plain that the American Federation of Labor did not oppose the position on the subject taken by the Chicago Federation and Illinois State Federation, and in a speech on the floor of the convention carried the delegates with him.—See *Proceedings of American Federation of Labor*, 1925.

Though active agitation of the issue has been dropped, Mr. Olander is convinced that his original prophecies of the dangers in the junior high school are coming true; he states that some of his fellow trade unionists who disagreed before are coming around to his view after observation of the system in practice.—Interview

[2] See *Report of Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics* (1900), pp. 252 f.

haps the State Federation has included good with bad in its sweeping condemnation. Certainly there have been powerful interests endeavoring to impose their own purposes upon new developments in education, and the alarm felt by trade-union leaders has a wholesome effect by forcing publicity and discussion. Probably, as actual experience with these experiments proceeds, the Federation will be able to dissociate the instruments themselves—particularly junior high schools and mental measurements—from efforts arising in various quarters to misuse them.

MILITARISM

In line with its policy of helping to maintain the democracy of the school system, the Illinois State Federation of Labor has consistently opposed military training in public schools. To an effort on foot in 1915 for the introduction of military units the Federation declared itself "absolutely opposed," for the reason that "the labor movement has always held that children should be taught the constructive ideals of peace rather than the destructive ideals of war." This policy was reaffirmed by the convention of 1919 with the remark that "the only benefit derived from military training is the physical outdoor exercise. This can easily be secured in other ways." Again in 1923 the Federation objected to "the spirit of militarism" and declared that one of the objects of military training in schools was "to create an officer class among those who will not be engaged in productive industries." All these objections were summed up the following year when the Committee on Schools wrote:

> Military training in our public and state schools tend to promote a spirit of militarism, the growth of which endangers the spirit of American democracy. The schools should be kept for the great purpose to which they have been dedicated—education. It is not the purpose of military training to provide for mental development. Its effect is to destroy individuality by teaching absolute obedience to superior officers.

Trade unionists were urged to use their influence against it in their respective communities.[1]

When the Boy Scout movement was first started members of organized labor found troops being organized in their communities, in some cases drilling with guns and performing other military maneuvers,[2] and they protested in the next convention of the State Federation. The Committee on Schools finally went into the matter thoroughly, and in its report for 1917 indorsed the non-militaristic Boy Scouts of America unreservedly, while condemning certain rival organizations with militaristic backing.[3]

INSTRUCTION AND PROPAGANDA

The labor movement has been concerned to see that the instruction offered to children in the public schools is of such a nature as to enable them to understand and deal with social and economic problems in an intelligent way, and it is also anxious that labor's point of view on such problems shall not be overlooked. It has opposed the use of the schools for employers' propaganda, and has sought to counteract such attempts by propaganda of its own. The Chicago Federation of Labor suggested, for example, that if junior chambers of commerce are to be permitted in the

[1] *Proc.* (1915), p. 279; (1919), p. 295; (1923), p. 459; (1924), p. 422.

[2] This was the "United States Boy Scouts," or "American Boy Scouts," not the "Boy Scouts of America" now so well known.—*Proc.* (1917), pp. 124–40.

[3] *Proc.* (1917), pp. 124–40. This report was based on a previous investigation conducted by the American Federation of Labor. Those in charge of the Scout movement had responded to the wishes of organized labor by eliminating from its program and ritual teachings of a militaristic nature and by altering certain parts of the Scout law which originally tended to teach subserviency to employers. For example, a portion of the Scout law read originally, "A Scout is loyal to the President and to his officers and to his parents, his country and employers; he must stick to them through thick and thin against anyone who is their enemy or even talks badly of them." This was changed to: "A Scout is loyal, is loyal to all to whom loyalty is due; his Scout leader, his home and parents and country."

schools, why not junior federations of labor?[1] The Committee on Schools said in 1922 that most textbooks on economics and civics were written from an antilabor point of view, while the unorganized teachers, being ignorant on labor questions, are unable to detect such propaganda; hence—organize the teachers.[2] The Federation has helped to provide labor speakers to talk in the public schools, thus presenting its point of view to supplement that supplied by the chambers of commerce.

Trade unionists have been urged to keep in touch with the public schools and to serve on boards of education. The Federation has stood for the payment of salaries to school boards so that wage-earners can afford to be members, and has asked for representation of labor on the boards administering state schools.[3] In 1926 Secretary Olander circulated a questionnaire which required officers of local central labor bodies to consult the school authorities in their communities, and he reported that almost everywhere there was a response which resulted in setting up the right sort of contacts, in arousing more interest in school affairs, and in giving central body delegates information they had previously lacked.[4]

The State Federation of Labor has asked for physical training courses in the schools, better rural schools, less mechanization in the course of study, "no high school of more than 2,000 pupils," and "no class larger than 25." In 1923 it appointed Miss Mary Haney to represent it on a committee of citizens which prepared and secured the passage of a kindergarten bill. Many more details might be

[1] *Proc.* (1920), p. 231.

[2] *Proc.* (1922), pp. 443–44.

[3] *Proc.* (1916), p. 253; (1921), p. 237. The element of having building operations and other labor done by union men enters here, of course.

[4] *Proc.* (1926), p. 130.

added, but these are sufficient to indicate the extent of the Federation's interest and the character of its policies.[1]

UNIVERSITIES

The Federation feels that since the University of Illinois is supported by taxes and belongs to the people, labor has a right to expect considerate treatment at its hands. Several times it has interested itself in the university's attitude toward union labor, both in hiring and in instructional policies. In 1921 and again in 1923 there was some complaint that the state university was unduly serving the purposes of private interests, and the Executive Board appointed a special committee to investigate. In August, 1923, the committee had "secured information on a number of matters of such a character that it was preparing to adopt a definite procedure,"[2] but at this point its labors apparently ceased, and it went the road of several other special committees. It never presented a report.

In 1925, when the convention met at Champaign-Urbana, Delegate Edwin R. Wright stated from the floor that he had read in fiction, in newspapers, and in magazines many scandalous stories about moral conditions at the universities and colleges of the country. He said that if chaperons coming under the jurisdiction of the college authorities fail to perform their duties and if drunken orgies take place the authorities are at fault. He was emphatic in saying that he did not charge that any such conditions existed at the University of Illinois, but so much publicity had been given to matters of the kind that he thought, as taxpayers and citizens, the convention should know the condition of affairs. He then offered a motion that the officers of

[1] See for complete details the reports of the Committee on Schools, particularly in the proceedings of 1914, 1916, 1919, and 1927.

[2] *WN*, August 11, 1923.

the University of Illinois be given the privilege of coming before the convention to make such statements as they wished on the subject, or that they be allowed to insert them in the convention records.[1]

Of course this speech was played up and distorted in the press, and naturally enough the university authorities were considerably irritated. They accepted the convention's offer, however, and Dean Babcock, Dean Clark, and Dean Thompson defended conditions at Urbana before the State Federation delegates. Afterward President Walker remarked: "This is the first time, at least that I have any knowledge of, that the responsible representatives of a university have had these charges against the school life of our country brought squarely before them, and they have met the issues squarely in their statements." The convention tendered a rising vote of thanks to the university's speakers.[2]

In 1927 the Federation condemned Professor Ely's "Institute for Research in Land Economics and Public Utilities" at Northwestern University, after hearing a report by the American Federation of Teachers, which had examined its connection with the National Association of Real Estate Boards and similar groups.

> Your committee desires to avoid any misunderstanding. It is not questioning the sincerity of Professor Ely's convictions, nor the right of the organized real estate interests to finance research. . . . . But the issue here is one of masquerading under false colors. We have an Institute affiliated with Northwestern University, and vouched for by Northwestern as a genuine Institute of Research. This Institute is largely supported by private groups, and it is obvious that much of that support would cease the moment the announced results of the research ran counter to the economic interests of those groups. . . . . It seems to your committee an acute and insidious form of a disguised control of higher education.

[1] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 53–54.

[2] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 70–74.

This report was indorsed, after Secretary Olander had insisted that it be made plain that the Federation was not making "a sweeping condemnation of a great university that has done a great deal of good."[1]

ORGANIZATION OF TEACHERS

In 1915 the State Federation of Labor aided the teachers in their struggle against the Chicago Board of Education's "Loeb rule," which forbade them to belong to a union. Subsequently it helped to secure the enactment of the Teachers' Tenure Law to guarantee against dismissal without a hearing. The platform of the Federation concerning schools has made a cardinal point of "safeguards for teachers," including tenure of positions during efficiency, right to organize, minimum annual salary, adequate training in state-supported normal schools, and adequate pensions and sick benefits. In encouraging the unionization of teachers organized labor hopes that "a spirit of fairness on labor problems may be created within the schools through direct contact of the teachers with productive workers."[2]

SCHOOL TAXES AND EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITY

For the past several years the Illinois State Federation of Labor has indorsed the entire legislative program of the Illinois State Teachers' Association, making the program of the association its own. The association calls for amendment of the state constitution to remove some of the limitations on revenue legislation, and particularly desires more liberal provisions for public schools through a larger state

[1] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 110–14.

[2] *Proc.* (1916), p. 100; (1917), p. 124; (1919), p. 296; (1921), pp. 234 f.; (1923), p. 459.

distributive school fund. Such a fund would tend to equalize educational opportunities from district to district.[1]

The Joint Labor Legislative Board has kept an eye on all educational bills in the legislature and has included summaries of them in its reports. In 1927 the Joint Board's discussion of these bills was prepared by representatives of the State Teachers' Association.[2] The State Federation of Labor has backed many improvements in the school laws of Illinois, bearing out President Walker's boast that "the workers have always been and must continue to be the most earnest and sincere advocates and supporters of our public school system."[3]

B. TAXATION

See chapter XXV on "The Constitution of Illinois."

C. PUBLIC UTILITIES

The Alton convention of 1915 pledged its support to the Public Ownership League of Cook County, recently organized by the Chicago Federation of Labor, and urged the formation of like bodies in other cities. It proclaimed that the protection of the rights of public employees to organize must go along with public ownership. In 1917 the State Federation backed the Typographical Union of Chicago in its efforts to have a municipal printing plant established in the metropolis. It opposed the Insull traction bills in the legislature of 1927; and organized labor, through the Joint Board, was a large factor in defeating a measure which proposed to place municipally owned and operated public utilities under the control of the State Commerce Commis-

[1] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 108–9.

[2] *Proc.* (1927), pp. 269 f.

[3] *Proc.* (1924), p. 51.

sion, the same as privately owned utilities. "We felt that it was unwise and dangerous to have these public utilities which are owned and operated in the interest of the people, by the people themselves, put under the control of an influence foreign to their municipalities which might be influenced by outside private utility corporations."[1]

The State Federation has also expressed itself on national questions of public ownership. The Quincy convention (1916) advocated "postalization" of the telegraph and telephone lines; and a resolution adopted in 1918 favored government ownership of railroads, telephones, and telegraphs. In 1919 the Federation protested against the movement to return the railroads, which had been taken over during the war emergency, to private hands; and it passed three resolutions in support of the Plumb plan. President Walker's report in 1921 recommended the nationalization of the mines, and the convention adopted the suggestion of the Committee on Officers' Reports that railroads and other public utilities should also be included.[2]

Five years later, however, the Federation refused to indorse the principle of nationalization of mines and railroads, holding, with the Resolutions Committee, that it had no right to interfere in questions of this nature which belonged within the jurisdiction of particular unions, some of which were not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.[3]

D. MISCELLANEOUS LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The co-operative law enacted by the Illinois legislature in 1915 was a result of the combined efforts of the Illinois

[1] *Proc.* (1915), p. 275; (1917), p. 293; *WN*, June 11, 1923; "Report of Joint Board," *Proc.* (1927), p. 181.

[2] *Proc.* (1916), p. 182; (1918), p. 184; (1919), pp. 237, 238, 324; (1921), pp. 60–63.

[3] *Proc.* (1926), pp. 187–88.

State Federation of Labor, the Illinois Mine Workers, and various farmers' organizations.[1] The State Federation also favored the Credit Union Law enacted in 1925, providing "a method whereby poor people may organize a credit union for the purpose of making loans to their members, thereby avoiding the exorbitant rates charged by loan sharks." The new law was printed in full in the Joint Board report of 1925 for the information of trade unionists.[2]

During the progressive enthusiasm associated with the Labor party movement the Chicago Federation of Labor submitted several resolutions on banking, which were adopted. These grew out of the failure of the Michigan Avenue Trust Company and other bank failures involving the savings of workers, together with the current scandals regarding the handling of state funds during Len Small's term as state treasurer. They included:

(1) A bank depositors' guarantee fund law similar to that now in force in the states of Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota;

(2) A home building association law such as is now in operation in North Dakota; and

(3) A state owned bank and banking system such as is now in operation in North Dakota. . . . .[3]

In 1922 the Federation declared, "The Eighteenth Amendment and the sham Volstead enforcement act are principally responsible for the prevailing numbers of unemployed, high taxes, increased crime and the awful numbers using dope and the apparent disregard of our laws," and recorded itself in favor of light wines and beer. Three years later a resolution for modification of the Volstead Act was introduced again. This time there was a sharp difference of opinion. Edwin R. Wright declared that "in twenty years

[1] *Proc.* (1915), p. 69; *WN*, May 15, 1915, June 19, 1915, October 2, 1915.

[2] *Proc.* (1925), pp. 258 f.

[3] *Proc.* (1921), pp. 298–300, 230–33.

as a professional labor organizer in the state of Illinois, as the president of this organization for some years, I have had more trouble fighting whiskey than fighting any scab employer"; and another delegate said that prohibition "has done more for the working man, union and non-union, than anything that has ever been done in any country on earth." A quarrel was averted when the two sides agreed on a simple indorsement of the American Federation of Labor's policy, which favored light wines and beer.[1] In 1927 the Federation refused to consider a resolution on prohibition, believing that it was introduced in the interest of a particular senatorial candidate or to produce dissension.[2]

[1] *Proc.* (1922), p. 403; (1925), pp. 83–85.

[2] See chapter xxiv.

PART IV

A BRIEF SUMMARY

CHAPTER XXIX

A BRIEF SUMMARY

Contract convict labor and other grievances requiring legislative action impelled the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly to call a convention in 1884 in order that the united sentiment of Illinois trade unionists might be heard on the question of "labor reform." This convention adopted a "platform" and brought its demands to the attention of the Democratic and Republican parties. The next year the "Illinois State Labor Association" came into being, and under its banner a vigorous and successful fight for a constitutional amendment to prohibit contract convict labor was conducted. This association took the name Illinois State Federation of Labor in 1888, but by that time strife between the Knights of Labor and the trade unionists organized under the newly created American Federation of Labor, together with the hysterical public reaction after the Haymarket bomb, had materially weakened its influence. Attempts to form a state labor party ended in confusion. By 1890 the Illinois State Federation of Labor was nearly extinct.

Then the printers led a reorganization, and the Federation revived. First it helped to elect Governor Altgeld, and indeed was close to this progressive governor throughout his administration. Populism and Labor party movements, some genuine and some fraudulent, then filled its conventions with turmoil for a few years. From 1892 to 1894 the Federation was dominated by one William C. Pomeroy, leader of a jolly gang known as the "Chicago labor skates" who specialized in labor directory advertising and political deals. Then T. J. ("Tommy") Morgan came forward with Plank 10, and

while his Socialist cohorts engaged the Pomeroy contingent in parliamentary battle, the downstaters, led by George Schilling, Charles J. Riefler, and other single-tax Democrats, seized control. They threw the "labor skates" out of the Federation. With Riefler as president and Walter Bush as secretary, the Federation ended this period in 1897 with some really constructive work toward building up the organization.

After a further era of incoherence in the years around 1900, marked by attempts of grafters and partisan politicians to "capture" the Federation for their own uses, the Illinois State Federation began to grow rapidly with the expanding labor movement. Larger conventions and reforms in the rules put it beyond the reach of raiding gangs and political henchmen, and the Illinois Federation became an influential and self-respecting organization. A larger financial income, augmented particularly in 1908 when the Illinois Mine Workers affiliated in a body, enabled the Federation to employ two full-time officers and to extend its activities. Thus, the Federation became a year-round functioning organization instead of a series of annual meetings, and under the secretaryship of James F. Morris from 1902 to 1914 and the presidency of Edwin R. Wright from 1906 to 1913 the organization attained consistent leadership toward definite purposes. This period in the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor is notable for the legislative successes that crowned its efforts. A Convict Labor Law, an improved Child Labor Law, the Miners' Qualification Act, the Women's Ten Hour Law, the Health, Safety and Comfort Act, the Workmen's Compensation Law, and a pioneer Occupational Disease Law were some of the major enactments the Federation helped to secure.

Since 1914, under the administrations of President John H. Walker and Secretary-Treasurer Victor A. Olander, the

Federation has grown still larger, its activities have expanded immensely, and the conduct of its affairs has been put on a thoroughly organized and efficient basis. The Teamsters', the Carpenters', and other large Chicago unions have taken a greater interest than ever before, and by increasing their delegations in the annual conventions have come to challenge the leadership of the miners. The war period gave an impetus to trade-union activity in Illinois, and after the war there was an optimistic forward movement on the part of labor, dramatized by the great steel strike on the one hand and the inauguration of a Labor party on the other. In both of these the Illinois State Federation of Labor had a hand. Then the reaction came, and the Federation found itself on the defensive, resisting the depletion of its ranks by industrial depression and the onslaughts of propagandist campaigns. During the war boom the Illinois State Federation of Labor, led by the Chicago Federation, had shown a spirit of progressivism and experiment; now it returned to the beaten path and the authority of the American Federation of Labor. Communist left-wingers took up the erstwhile progressive issues of independent political action and industrial unionism, adding them to its kit of tools for "boring from within," and the Federation angrily spurned their meddling impertinences.

In the legislative arena the supreme efforts of the Federation after 1914 were directed to one paramount purpose, the limitation of the labor injunction. During the war and in the reaction that followed little labor legislation could be obtained; after 1920 the Federation had to fight with all its strength to hold its legislative lines against severe attacks in the form of constabulary bills, antipicketing, antistrike, and suability bills, attempts to repeal the Miners' Qualification Law, and a proposed state constitution which would have written into permanent law the reactionary mood of

the era of "normalcy." The defeat of the proposed constitution in 1922 under the Federation's leadership was its greatest defensive victory, and a service not only to organized labor but to the people of Illinois. In 1925, when the post-war reaction had died down somewhat, the Federation finally obtained an Injunction Limitation Law from the legislature. It immediately began to press a new bill directed against the "yellow dog contract," and continued to seek old-age pensions, a women's eight-hour law, and other items on its program.

Such is the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. It has mainly sought to promote the legislative interests of labor in the state of Illinois, and from the convict-labor amendment of 1886 to the Wage Guarantee Law of 1927 its efforts have undeniably been a potent factor in shaping the labor code of the commonwealth and also in shaping other legislation of interest to labor, such as that pertaining to schools and taxes.

One who would glimpse the actual process of labor legislation must look behind the General Assembly, which after all is much like a weather-vane in reflecting the breezes that blow upon it. He must look upon the labor lobby and back of that to the policy determining conventions of the Illinois State Federation of Labor with its committees and executive officials; then he must look, on the other side, at the Illinois Manufacturers' Association and kindred organizations, also with their policy-determining conventions and boards. It is in the interplay of these two opposing sides, each focusing upon the legislature all the public opinion it can gather or create, that the process of labor legislation is found.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

NOTE ON SOURCES AND METHOD

When this investigation was begun the present officers of the Illinois State Federation of Labor had in their possession only one small booklet published by the Federation before 1898; this was a tiny printed report of the proceedings of the Jacksonville convention of 1890 which had evidently been preserved by some old-timer and pasted inside the cover of a later volume of convention proceedings. No one even seemed to know when or where the Illinois State Federation of Labor had started its career. The official seal in use said "Organized 1882"; an earlier seal had said "Organized 1888." As a matter of fact, the Federation began in 1884 and took its present name when it affiliated with the American Federation of Labor in 1888. This absence of documents made the reconstruction of the early history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor a difficult task.

A search of university and historical libraries, pleas through the *News Letter* of the Federation for old records, and inquiries of veteran trade unionists yielded a number of valuable finds, which, together with the well-kept records of recent years, comprised the official documents finally available for this study. This material in itself would have given a very incomplete picture of the Illinois State Federation of Labor in its early days. It had to be pieced out, first of all, by some sort of authentic record of the doings of the many conventions for which no official documents at all could be had. Resort to newspaper files filled this gap, and, by good fortune, filled it rather completely.

Starting with little or no definite information, the trail had to be followed from clew to clew. By scanning the date-

lines in Chicago newspapers it was possible to ferret out a fairly complete list of the meeting-places and dates of the missing conventions in the eighties and nineties. Then, armed with this list, local newspapers in the convention cities were consulted to find out whether or not issues published by the local press on these dates were extant. In at least two cases the files of a local paper had been destroyed by fire, but in each of these cases it so happened that the files of its competitor were intact; so that at least some information concerning every missing convention was found and copied. It may be remarked that the information so secured seems to be more authentic than might be supposed. In several instances it is apparent that what the local newspaper printed was simply the secretary's minutes, in full, resolutions and all, with a few comments by way of introduction. In other instances it was possible to check the accounts of two different papers against each other, or against documents.

A number of labor papers published in Chicago also furnished useful information. Among them were the *Knights of Labor* (late eighties), the *Rights of Labor* (early nineties), the *Eight-Hour Herald* (middle nineties), the *Chicago Federationist* (late nineties), and, on the Labor party movement of 1920, the *New Majority*.

The Chicago central body has always sent delegates to the Illinois State Federation of Labor conventions, and these delegates have submitted reports. Also, the two organizations have co-operated on legislative and other matters. The minute book of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly covering the meetings from February 20, 1887, to September 15, 1889, has almost miraculously survived the many vicissitudes of city central organizations in Chicago, and it was made available by the present secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor, Edward N. Nockels. Access has also

been had to the minutes of the Chicago Federation from 1903 to date.

Thomas J. Morgan was a well-known figure in the labor world of the eighties and nineties. He not only made news, but preserved it for the future in extensive scrapbooks of newspaper clippings and cases full of documents. The bulk of this interesting labor miscellany is on file at the Illinois Historical Survey, University of Illinois, Urbana, and the rest is at the University of Chicago. The clippings in "Tommy" Morgan's scrapbooks were an invaluable aid in piecing out the story of labor political movements in the nineties.

Documents and printed records are necessary for getting "facts" and precise dates; but by themselves they would yield only a skeleton history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. It is the old-timer with his reminiscences and recollections and the men and women in the movement today who are able to clothe the skeleton with flesh and blood. The "inside" knowledge of motives and personalities that can be gained only by conversation with people who have actually helped to build the Illinois State Federation of Labor is essential for any proper understanding of it. Hence, personal interviews with a large number of leaders and former leaders of the Federation and with persons acquainted with its activities have supplied much of the information and more of the interpretation that appears in this history.

Considerable background material has been gleaned from Commons and associates' *History of Labour in the United States*, from the *Centennial History of Illinois*, and particularly from Earl R. Beckner's *History of Illinois Labor Legislation*. These, as well as other sources, are cited at the appropriate places in the text.

The official Federation documents employed in this study or newspaper accounts used when no official proceedings of early conventions were available are listed below:

1884 *Official Proceedings of the Illinois State Labor Convention held in Chicago, March 26-28*, 1884 P. 22. (Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.)
Address of the Executive Committee Appointed by the State Labor Convention, together with the Report of the Committee Appointed to Wait on the Republican and Democratic State Conventions (1884), P. 16. (Same location.)

1885 *Illinois State Register*, Springfield, February 12–14.
Illinois State Journal, Springfield, same dates.

1886 *Decatur Review*, June 2–3.
Times, Chicago, same dates.

1887 *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Session of the Illinois State Labor Association, held in Springfield, January 25–27, 1887, with Constitution and Platform*, P. 10. (Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.)
Illinois State Register, Springfield, same dates.
Illinois State Journal, Springfield, same dates.

1888 *Peoria Transcript*, January 11–13.
Peoria Journal, same dates.
Times, Chicago, same dates.

1889 *Bloomington Pantagraph*, January 9–11.
Times, Chicago, same dates.

1890 *Official Proceedings of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, 7th Annual Session, Jacksonville, Ill., January 14–16, 1890*, p. 34. (Illinois State Federation of Labor Office.)
Quincy Whig, November 19–21.

1891 *Official Call of the Alton Convention*, and certain printed resolutions sent to members of Congress. (Furnished by John C. Harding.)
Alton Daily Sentinel-Democrat, November 10–13.

1892 *Official Call of the Ottawa Convention.* (Furnished by John C. Harding.)
Preamble and Constitution of Illinois State Federation of Labor in *Official Annual Labor Gazette*, 1893 (Columbian edition), published under auspices of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. (Crerar Library, and University of Chicago Library.)

Ottawa Republican-Times, October 13.
Ottawa Free-Trader, October 15.

1893 *Official Proceedings, 11th Annual Convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, Galesburg, Ill., November 14, 1893*, P. 43. (Crerar Library, University of Chicago Library, and Newberry Library.)

1894 "Proceedings of the 12th Annual Session of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, 1894, at Belleville, October 9, 1894," in *Official Annual Labor Gazette*, 1895. (Crerar Library and University of Chicago Library.)

1895 *Peoria Herald*, October 9–12.

1896 *Official Proceedings, East St. Louis Convention of Illinois State Federation of Labor, November 17–20, 1896*, P. 16. Also copy of Official Call, Platform, and Constitution. (Furnished by Walter S. Bush.)

1897 *Official Call for Bloomington Convention*, 1897. *President's Annual Address*, Bloomington Convention, September 14, 1897. *Report of Secretary-Treasurer Walter S. Bush*, 1897. (Furnished by Walter S. Bush.)
Bloomington Bulletin, September 14–17.

1898 Complete file of official proceedings of annual conventions of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. (Illinois State Federation of Labor Office.)

1901 *Official Labor Gazette*, Illinois State Federation of Labor. (University of Chicago Library.)

1914 Dec. to date Complete file of the *Weekly News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. (Illinois State Federation of Labor office.)

1914 to date Various minor publications of the Illinois State Federation of Labor and the files of the secretary's office, to which Secretary Victor A. Olander generously gave access.

APPENDIX B

THE GROWTH OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

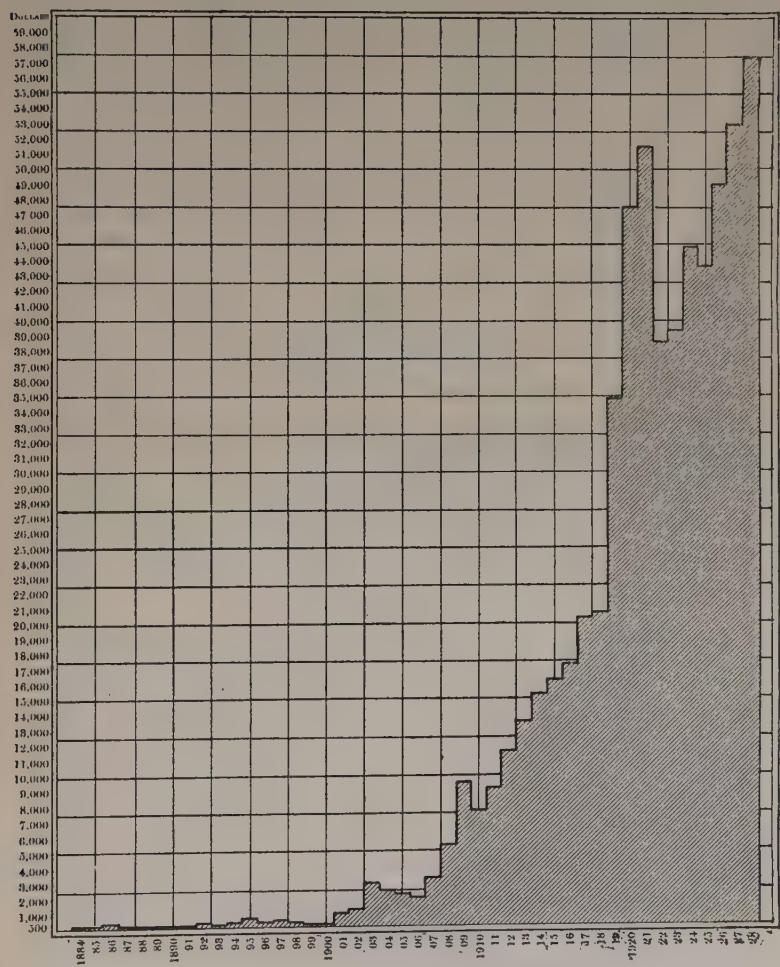
The accompanying charts show in a graphic way the growth in membership and increase in financial backing of the Illinois State Federation of Labor during the forty-five years of its history.

FIGURE 1

The first convention was held in Seamen's Hall, Chicago, in March, 1884. It met at the call of the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, and 104 delegates attended, of whom 61 were from Chicago. The next year, at Springfield, there were 34 in the convention, and the number declined through the eighties until at Jacksonville in January, 1890, only 12 delegates met to mourn the impotence of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. Each man present got an office. In the fall, however, Victor B. Williams, of Typographical 16, and some others brought together another convention, at which there were 33 delegates, and determined to revive the Federation. The chart shows that its growth after that time, though sometimes interrupted, was fairly regular. For the period since 1914 convention attendance has ceased to indicate the strength of the Federation, for further increases in size merely tended to make the convention unwieldy.

Of the 104 delegates at the 1884 meeting, at least 45 represented local assemblies or district assemblies of the Knights of Labor, an organization which had a remarkably sudden growth in the middle eighties and since 1890 has been practically extinct. During the first four years of the Fed-

eration's existence the Knights played a prominent part in its deliberations, but after the cigar-makers persuaded the Illinois Federation to back their blue label against the



Knights of Labor white label the Knights withdrew. In 1888 the Illinois Federation affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, which was fighting the Knights.

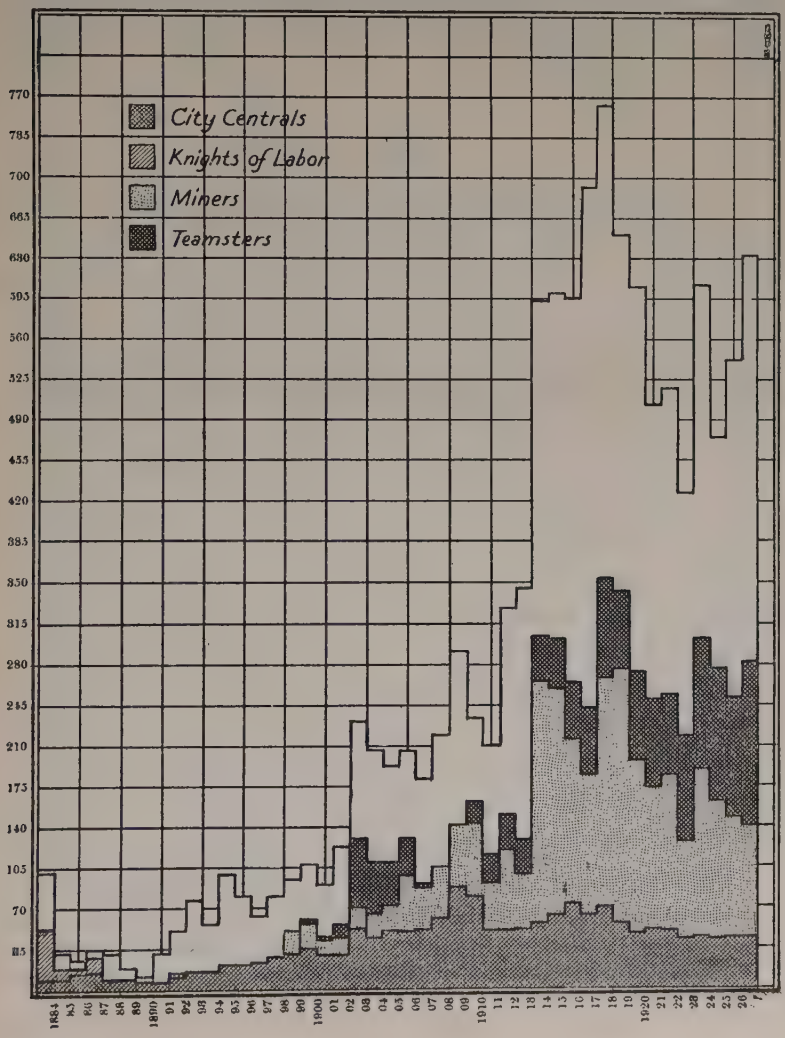
Another interesting fact illustrated in this chart is the very substantial part of the attendance at the small conventions of 1880–1900 furnished by city central bodies. Up to 1890, in particular, the central bodies supplied the bulk of the delegates and kept the infant Federation from dying out. The Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly, which had started the State Federation in the first place, was its mainstay. As the Federation grew larger, however, the central bodies, being limited to a fixed number of delegates, became less and less conspicuous in the conventions, as the diagram shows.

The United Mine Workers began to come in just before 1900. There had been 1 or 2 miners in the sessions of the eighties, and a few during the middle nineties, but in 1898 there were 20. This number had increased to 52 by 1908. In that year the per capita tax was reduced and the miners' unions of the state affiliated in a body. There were 212 miner delegates in the 1913 convention when John H. Walker was elected president for the first time; in 1918 there were 223; but since that time, as will be seen from the chart, the number has declined about half.

The teamsters came in suddenly just after 1900; this was coincident with the rise of their organization in Chicago. In 1902 as many as 58 teamsters presented themselves at the East St. Louis convention, and after some wrangling were admitted. After 1905 they dropped out for a few years, but their delegation returned in 1909 and has grown steadily since. In 1925 the teamsters outnumbered the miners, with 103 delegates to 100 from the United Mine Workers, and their delegation has continued to increase, while that of the miners has decreased somewhat. The Herrin convention, 1928, had 150 teamsters and 80 miners in attendance. The carpenters had a delegation of 89 in 1927, but only 58 in 1928.

FIGURE 2

In the early years it was common for a majority of the delegates to hail from Chicago, and it was not until 1895 that the "downstaters" began to come regularly in any numbers.



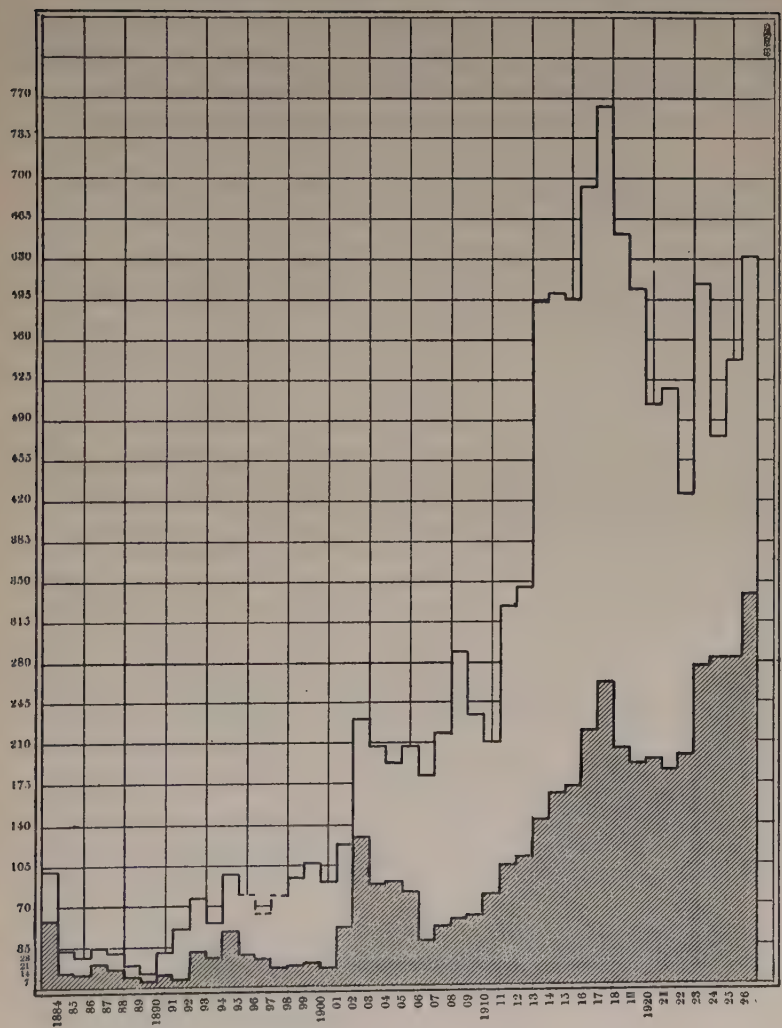
With the influx of the miners and the more general affiliation of unions over the state to the State Federation, Chicago delegates became a minority, but of late years the metropolis has again furnished more than half the entire number (in 1924, 282 out of 474; in 1928, 323 out of 591). The decrease in number of miners and increase of teamsters partially accounts for this fact.

FIGURE 3

A much more exact indicator of the Federation's growth of late years is the amount of per capita tax paid in by affiliated local unions. Figure 3 shows per capita tax receipts,[1] rising from $73 in 1888, to $425 in 1897, to $1,207 in 1902, to $15,294 in 1914, and finally to $57,497 in 1928. Estimates of the dues-paying membership of the Federation for the period since 1914, based upon the tax receipts and the tax-rate, have already been presented in chapter xi.

Another indication of the growth of the Federation is the number of organizations—local unions and central bodies—affiliated. In 1884 there were 62 different organizations represented at the convention; both in 1885 and 1886 there were 18; in 1890 only 9. During the nineties the number grew gradually from 25 to 62; by 1908 there were 236 organizations on the rolls. Then more than 300 Mine Workers' locals joined in a body through their state organization and the number of affiliations leaped to 574. In 1916 the number was 900. It passed the thousand mark in 1917–18, was 1,255 at

[1] In the early years dues were based on the number of delegates sent to the conventions rather than upon the membership of affiliated unions. Strictly speaking, these were delegate taxes, not per capita taxes. Data are lacking for some of the years during the eighties and nineties. In such cases reasonable guesses are shown on the chart.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the peak in 1920, declined probably to less than 1,000 in the depression which followed,[1] and now stands at 1,031.[2]

[1] The Federation ceased publishing the number of affiliated organizations after 1922. In that year there were 1,222 organizations on its roll, but 197 of these were more than twelve months in arrears.—Reports of secretary-treasurer.

[2] As of September 27, 1928. This number was distributed as follows:

Unions	953
Central bodies	49
District Councils	26
Leagues	3
	1,031

Of the local unions, 308 were miners' locals.—Secretary-treasurer's office.

APPENDIX C

A COMPARISON WITH OTHER STATE FEDERATIONS OF LABOR[1]

In point of time, the Illinois State Federation of Labor was one of the earliest state federations to be organized. Seven of the forty-eight state federations existing today had been founded by 1890, and the Illinois Federation (1884) was the fourth of these.[2] During the nineties the number of state federations was more than doubled, but the great burst of activity in the state-federation movement came just after the turn of the century, thus running concurrently with, or perhaps slightly behind, the era of most rapid organization in

[1] A considerable store of information regarding the development and activities of state federations of labor has been gathered, largely through questionnaires answered and documents supplied by their secretaries. The object has been to ascertain in how far the Illinois State Federation of Labor may be considered typical of the forty-nine state federations (counting Porto Rico) now included in the American Federation of Labor.

Data of some sort were obtained regarding forty-three of these state federations. In some cases merely the constitution or the date of organization came to hand, but many state federation officers were kind enough to send supplementary statements prepared with considerable care.

Secretary Victor A. Olander of the Illinois State Federation aided in obtaining this information.

A student at the University of Chicago, Mr. John Shire, analyzed some twenty-eight state federation constitutions in connection with his classwork on trade unions under Professor Paul H. Douglas, and he has permitted the present writer to use his results.

[2] The New York State Federation (1864), the New Jersey State Federation (1879), and the Massachusetts State Federation (sometime between 1879 and 1882) are its elders. After Illinois came state federations in Indiana (1885), Connecticut (1887), and Michigan (1889).

Of course, there were many state eight-hour leagues in the sixties, but no state labor organization except the Workingmen's Assembly of the State of New York (precursor of the New York State Federation of Labor) survived the depression period of the seventies.

the labor movement as a whole. From 1900 to 1904 at least eleven new state federations of labor appeared, and many others, like that in Illinois, took on new life. This fact helps to explain the truly remarkable spread of state labor and social legislation which got under way in the first decade of the present century. By 1904 most industrial states had state federations of labor, and since that time the American Federation of Labor has gradually completed its roster of state branches.[1]

Very commonly state federations of labor have been launched at the call of city central bodies that needed help in their legislative programs, and thus the Illinois State Federation is quite typical in its manner of origin. Most of the early state federations arose rather independently out of local situations in each state; several state federations antedate the American Federation of Labor and even many of the later ones organized during the eighties and nineties ran along independently for a number of years before affiliating with the national body. Since the nineties, however, the American Federation of Labor has taken a more direct part in establishing state federations, and those established previously have acknowledged its authority over them.

[1] State federations established in the nineties: Minnesota (1890), Missouri (1891), Iowa and Wisconsin (1893), Virginia (1895), Colorado (1896), Tennessee (1897), Georgia (1899), and Nebraska and Utah sometime between 1895 and 1899.

State federations of labor established in the first decade after 1900: Texas and Alabama (1900), California, Florida, and Louisiana (1901), Washington, Pennsylvania, and Oregon (1902), West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Maine (1903), Arkansas (1904), Maryland and District of Columbia (1905), Montana (1908), Wyoming (1909), and Arizona (1910).

Since 1910: North Dakota (1911), Idaho (1916), Mississippi (1919), Delaware and South Dakota (1920), and Nevada (1921).

The writer has been unable to learn the dates of organization of state federations that exist, at least nominally, in Kansas, Kentucky, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Vermont.

In size the Illinois State Federation of Labor is not typical. With the single exception of New York, it has the largest affiliated membership of any state federation in the country. Its conventions are much larger than those of any other state federation, and its yearly income, totaling well over $50,000, is half again as great as that of the New York State Federation and many times greater than that of most state federations. It is one of the (and quite likely *the*) best organized, best managed, and most influential state federations of labor in the land.

The proportion of the American Federation of Labor trade-union membership in Illinois paying dues to the Illinois State Federation of Labor is estimated at from 70 per cent to 80 per cent,[1] and this is also the estimate made by state federation officials in California and Ohio. In New York the secretary places the ratio at about two-thirds. As a rule, it seems that half or more than half of the eligible local unions in most of the states fail to join the state federation of labor,[2] though it is usually the smaller unions that stay out, as shown by the fact that the proportion of the membership outside is only about 25 per cent. This is the situation in spite of the following requirement in the constitution of the American Federation of Labor:

It shall be the duty of all National and International Unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor to instruct their Local Unions to join Chartered Central Labor Bodies, Departments and State Federations in their vicinity where such exist. Similar instructions shall be given

[1] The bookkeeper for the Federation makes this estimate, though it is admittedly little more than a well-informed guess.

[2] The secretary of the Colorado State Federation states that 50 per cent of the eligible local unions are affiliated to his organization, and believes this to be the largest such percentage for any state federation of labor. In Illinois there are about 1,100 organizations inside the state federation and about 1,400 (mostly small) outside; this includes only American Federation of Labor unions, for others are not eligible to membership in the state federation.

by the American Federation of Labor to all Trade and Federal Labor Unions under its jurisdiction.—Article XI, section 2.

With few exceptions the state federations of labor are governed by annual[1] conventions made up of delegates from local unions and central bodies. In general, the plan of representation is quite similar to that followed in Illinois; that is, a fixed number of delegates for each central body (often three or five), and a number in proportion to membership for local unions (one delegate for each hundred members, for example). Quite a number of state federations allow fewer delegates, in proportion, to the larger unions (for example, two delegates for the first hundred members, one for each succeeding hundred), though nowhere does a state federation employ the steeply graduated system of the American Federation of Labor conventions. Also unlike the American Federation of Labor, state federations follow the rule of "one man one vote" in their conventions, with two important exceptions. Ohio has a modified cumulative voting plan under which no delegate casts more than five votes. In California each delegate casts as many votes as the number of men he represents; if a carpenters' local, for example, has a membership of 1,000 and sends 5 delegates to the convention each casts 200 votes. Central bodies play a very important part in the smaller state federations of labor, but not in the larger ones; this accords with the history of the Illinois State Federation of Labor.

Taxation is on much the same principle as representation. Central bodies usually pay a fixed amount, as in Illinois, the precise figure varying from $15.00 a quarter to $5.00 a year. Local unions contribute to the state federation on a per capita basis in practically every case; the rate varies as

[1] Delaware has a biennial convention, and perhaps there are one or two other exceptions.

between different states from 1 cent to 20 cents a member a month, but the higher figure is quite unusual.

Nineteen state federations of labor employ one officer on full time, ten, like the Illinois Federation, employ two officers on full time, and one (Pennsylvania) has three full-time officers on its staff. The remainder pay their officers for part-time work or depend upon volunteer service, as did the Illinois State Federation of Labor in its early days. Salaries range from $7,500 a year (New York) down to nothing. Executive boards have charge of the affairs of the state federations between conventions. Most state federations elect their officers in convention; out of thirty-two constitutions examined on this point only seven provide for the referendum system, which is used in Illinois.

Some device, such as the Joint Labor Legislative Board, through which the Illinois State Federation of Labor co-operates on legislative matters with the railroad brotherhoods and other non-American Federation of Labor organizations, is not uncommon among the better organized state federations, though Illinois is probably somewhat unique in the definiteness with which this machinery is provided. Colorado holds a labor political convention the day after the adjournment of the regular state federation convention. Fraternal representation, without voting power, is quite commonly accorded non-American Federation of Labor organizations in state federation conventions.

Among the declared objects embodied in the constitution of state federations of labor the enactment of favorable and defeat of unfavorable legislation is on a par with the "encouragement and formation" of local unions and central bodies in frequency of occurrence. Most state federation constitutions proclaim these two aims. Next in prevalence come encouragement of the labor press and promotion of the union label.

The interests and activities of state federations vary with local conditions, of course. All seek, in general, the sort of laws that the Illinois State Federation has demanded during its career, though in North Dakota the state federation co-operates with the Non-Partisan League on a program which would be branded "socialistic" elsewhere, and in some of the southern states the federations still work for elementary labor laws that were accepted long ago in the North. The emphasis laid upon organizing activities varies; some federations require that a definite proportion of their income (in one case half) must be devoted to organizing work; some require the president to visit each local union at least once or twice a year; most give support to strikes by collecting donations and help to publish and spread boycotts. The Colorado State Federation maintains a department for assisting its members to prepare arguments in wage cases. The Pennsylvania Federation makes workers' education one of its major interests, and was the first of a number of state federations to do so. The New York State Federation publishes a *Bulletin* about twenty times a year, in makeup much like the *Weekly News Letter* of the Illinois State Federation. The Ohio Federation issues a quarterly bulletin; the Oklahoma Federation publishes a monthly labor paper; the Arizona Federation owns and operates the *Arizona Labor Journal*, and the *Wyoming Labor Journal* is maintained by a tax on the members of the state federation.

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